FEATURES: SOLIDARITY OVER STRIFE P.26 | FEATURES: $500 BILLION, 1 VISION P.30

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THE TABLE IS SET

Will Geneva talk change everything... or nothing?

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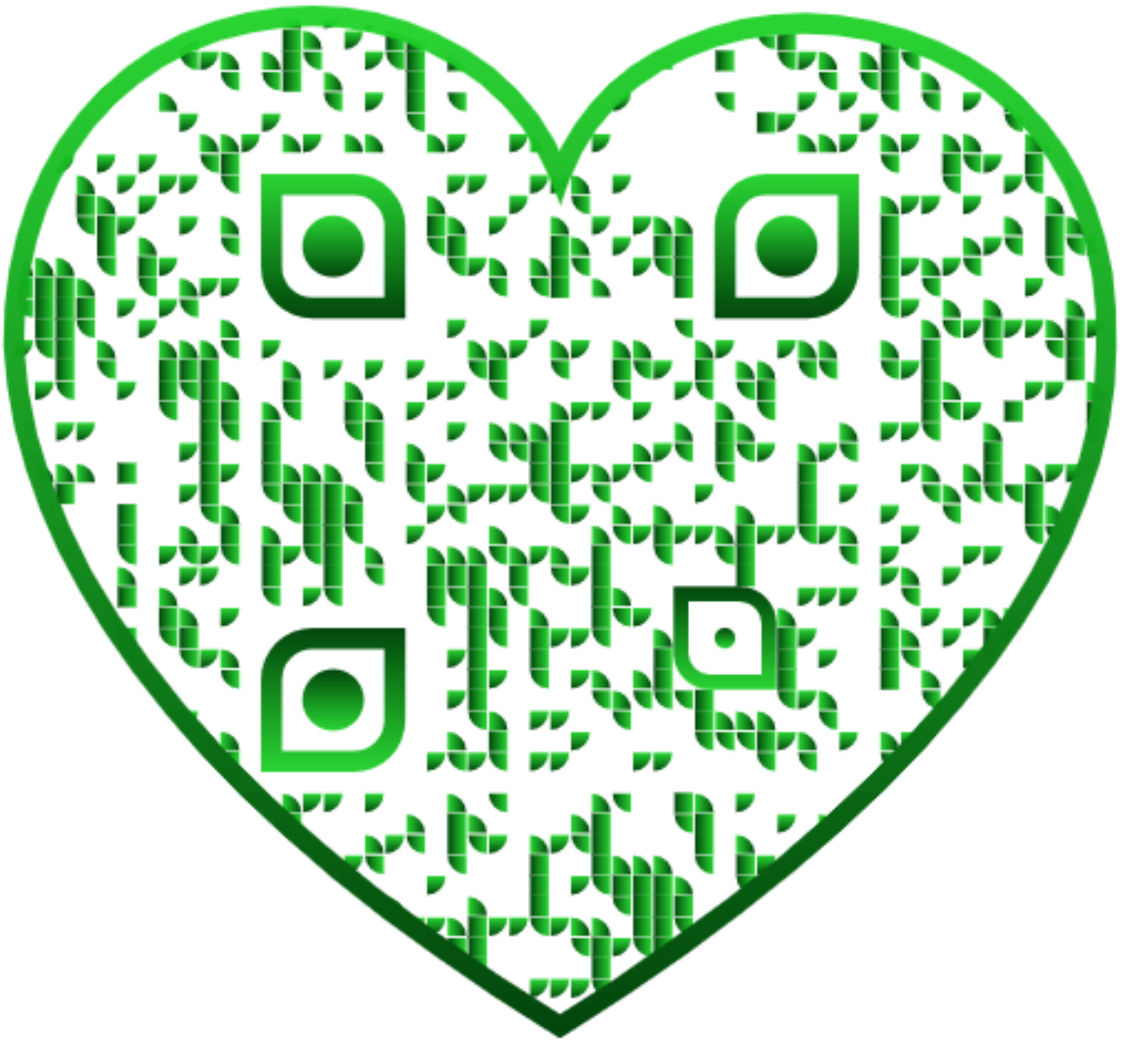

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Interdependence Day

China and the United States held a high-level meeting on economic and trade affairs in Geneva, Switzerland, on May 10-11. The meeting was candid, in-depth and constructive, achieved substantial progress and reached important consensuses. The two sides agreed to substantially reduce bilateral tariff levels and establish a consultation mechanism for economic and trade relations.

The economic and trade relations between China and the U.S., respectively the world's largest developing economy and the world's largest developed economy, are inherently complementary. Bilateral trade has created numerous jobs in both countries, abundant business opportunities and huge profits for their businesses.

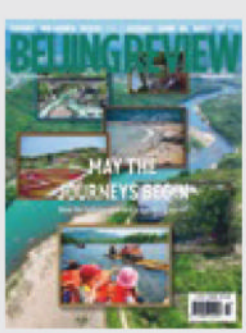
The outcomes of the Geneva meeting indicate that although Washington is still talking tough on economic and trade issues, it has realized that decoupling from China is unrealistic and that economic and trade cooperation with China is crucial for the U.S. economy and employment.

U.S. industries and consumers have been greatly impacted by the tariff confrontation their government initiated with China. In the first quarter of this year, many well-known American companies withdrew or lowered their performance forecasts. U.S. shipping and supply chain multinational United Parcel Service announced plans to reduce its workforce by roughly 20,000 during 2025 to lower operational costs. These setbacks have prompted the U.S. Government to seek solutions to trade issues with China and pursue cooperation.

Economic and trade relations between China and the U.S. also have an important impact on the stability and development of the global economy. Together, they account for over one third of the world's GDP, nearly one fourth of the human population on Earth and around one fifth of global trade. The two countries play an important role in the global economic system and their greater cooperation is eagerly anticipated worldwide.

However, both cooperation and confrontation coexist within current China-U.S. relations. There is cooperation and exchange between the two countries in the field of AI. U.S. chip giant NVIDIA integrates China's DeepSeek-R1 AI model as a NIM microservice, and U.S. tech firm OpenAI has drawn on China's progress in the AI field. But at the same time, the U.S. is restricting China's access to high-end chips.

In the future, China-U.S. relations will continue to face many challenges. The U.S. may continue to engage in confrontation in some fields, but in many more fields what it needs most is cooperation with China. **BR**



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SAFETY FIRST

A girl participates in a simulated firefighting drill under the guidance of a firefighter in Laodian Town, Yangxin County, Binzhou, Shandong Province, on May 11. China observes National Disaster Prevention and Reduction Day on May 12 each year. Across the country, activities such as drills and training sessions are conducted to enhance public knowledge of disaster prevention and self-rescue techniques.

XINHUA

Roses Reimagined

Tourists pose for photos at the Ninth International Symposium on Rose Research and Cultivation in Mentougou District, Beijing, on May 11. The event, which ran from May 10 to 15, featured more than 1,000 varieties of *Rosa chinensis*, or the Chinese rose, from all over the world.

Population Surveys

China will launch two nationwide population panel surveys this year to help strengthen statistical work related to demographic changes in the country and support the population's high-quality development, according to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS).

The two surveys are to be separately carried out from June 1 to 25, and from November 16 to December 5, according to the NBS.

Residents will be asked to provide basic information, including their name, gender, age and education level, as well as details about their employment, marital status, family births and deaths, and child welfare.

The population panel surveys, an effort to strengthen population statistics work and dynamic monitoring, constitute a critical supplement to population sample surveys in non-census years.

Improving Student Wellness

Beijing unveiled a new initiative on May 13 to promote the holistic development of primary and secondary school students, emphasizing the interconnectedness of physical and mental wellbeing.

Structured into five sections encompassing 20 measures, the policy aims to integrate moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetic and labor education while strengthening student relationships with peers, teachers and parents, according to the Beijing Municipal Education Commission.

This is the first time Beijing has explicitly linked physical health outcomes—such as reducing myopia, obesity and spinal issues—to psychological resilience, advocating for simultaneous progress in both areas.

Key measures include mandatory participation in at least one school club or interest group, designated "teacher-student dialogue days," and a call for parents to engage in daily 15-minute conversations and one-hour activities with their children.

Schools are encouraged to expand team sports, including football and basketball, to foster perseverance. Additionally, public areas will feature psychological support corners and stress-relief facilities.

The plan also outlines shared responsibilities across society. Professional social workers and volunteers will support health education, while authorities are committed to stricter oversight of online content and screen time through collaborative "screen-free campaigns" involving students and parents.

Beijing will implement a three-tiered evaluation system at the city, district and school levels to monitor progress.

AI Curriculum

China will establish a tiered AI education system spanning primary, junior high and senior high schools to guide students from foundational cognitive awareness to practical technological innovation, according to policy documents unveiled on May 12.

At the primary school level, the Ministry of Education (MOE) prioritizes AI literacy through exposure to basic technologies, including voice recognition and image classification.

Junior high school students will deepen their understanding of AI logic, examine machine learning processes and develop critical thinking to identify misinformation in generative AI outputs.

In senior secondary education, the focus shifts toward applied innovation. Students will use accumulated AI knowledge to design and refine AI algorithm models, while cultivating interdisciplinary systems thinking.

To achieve the goals, the MOE will integrate AI-enabled teaching competencies into the teacher training framework. Additionally, it mandates schools to develop age-appropriate curricula with tiered instructional practices that align with cognitive development stages.

Notably, the ministry underscores generative AI's pedagogical potential. "Teachers can

empower generative AI tools to construct interactive teaching and create immersive learning experiences," said an official overseeing basic education.

The official also called for strengthening students' logical and innovative thinking through generative AI-powered interactive learning ecosystems.

Meanwhile, the MOE prohibits students from submitting AI-generated content as academic work or examination responses. Simultaneously, it demands that teachers cultivate learners' capacity for critical thinking of AI outputs, thereby fostering authentic engagement in information processing.

Legislative Plan

The General Office of the State Council, China's highest state administrative organ, has unveiled its legislative agenda for 2025, with a focus on strengthening legislation in key sectors, emerging industries and areas involving foreign affairs, Xinhua News Agency reported on May 14.

In a push for high-quality development, the legislative plan lists draft laws including the national development planning law and the financial law.

To enhance public wellbeing, the plan includes draft laws such as the social assistance law and the medical insurance law, and draft amendments to the Food Safety Law and the Prison Law.

To bolster legal frameworks related to foreign affairs, the agenda contains a proposed revision to the Foreign Trade Law and new rules for implementing China's Anti-Foreign Sanctions Law.

The State Council is also set to introduce regulations on sharing government data, among others, to improve governance.

New Professions

China's human resources authorities on May 8 unveiled a list of 17 newly recognized professions.

These new professions include cross-border e-commerce operations manager, drone swarm flight planner and electronic circuit designer, according to the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security (MHRSS).

The ministry also announced 42 newly classified types of work—its largest expansion in recent years—such as generative AI systems testing and intelligent warehouse operations and maintenance.

Experts say the emergence of these new professions reflects evolving demand in production and everyday life, blazing new trails for Chinese jobseekers, especially those of younger generations.

China initiated its new profession recognition work in 2018. From 2019 to 2024, the MHRSS recognized 93 new professions.

The country's Government Work Report this year set the target of creating over 12 million new urban jobs in 2025, with the aim of maintaining a surveyed urban unemployment rate of about 5.5 percent for the year.

XINHUA

A Perfect Fit

A model presents a creation during the 2025 Puyuan Fashion Week in Puyuan Town of Jiaxing, Zhejiang Province, on May 12. The event, held from May 9 to 13, featured fashion shows, forums, carnivals, exhibitions and trade fairs, showcasing the charm of water-town culture while establishing a benchmark for knitwear fashion.

XINHUA

Hit by Hail

Rain and hail fall in an alleyway in Beijing's Xicheng District on May 13. The rare and localized hailstorm was accompanied by strong winds and thunderstorms across the city.

Auto Market

China's auto output and sales reported double-digit increases in the first four months of the year, indicating vibrant domestic consumption despite global uncertainties.

Auto production stood at nearly 10.18 million units in the period, up 12.9 percent from a year ago, while auto sales rose 10.8 percent to 10.06 million units, the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers said on May 12.

It was the first time that the country's auto production and sales in the January-April period both surpassed the 10-million-unit mark.

In particular, new-energy vehicles (NEVs) posted strong growth. NEV production surged 48.3 percent year on year to nearly 4.43 million units in the first four months, with the sales up 46.2 percent year on year to 4.3 million units.

NEVs accounted for 42.7 percent of total new vehicle sales in China in the period.

The data also showed that the country's auto exports climbed 6 percent year on year to nearly 1.94 million units in the first four months. Notably, NEV exports soared 52.6 percent to 642,000 units.

Foreign Trade

China's total goods imports and exports in yuan-denominated terms expanded 5.6 percent year on year in April, official data showed.

In April, exports rose 9.3 percent year on year to 2.27 trillion yuan ($314 billion), while imports went up 0.8 percent year on year to 1.57 trillion yuan ($217 billion), according to the General Administration of Customs of China.

In the first four months of this year, China's total goods imports and exports in yuan-denominated terms expanded 2.4 percent to 14.14 trillion yuan ($1.96 trillion), the data showed.

During the period, exports rose 7.5 percent to 8.39 trillion yuan ($1.16 trillion), while imports fell 4.2 percent to 5.75 trillion yuan ($797 billion).

Sci-Tech Board

The first batch of China's sci-tech innovation bonds debuted on May 9, indicating the inauguration of the country's sci-tech board in the bond market.

A roadshow was held at the Beijing Financial Assets Exchange, featuring the first eight firms to issue sci-tech innovation bonds in the interbank bond market.

The sci-tech board aims to facilitate financial institutions, technology enterprises and equity investment funds in issuing bonds that support scientific and technological innovation, said Pan Gongsheng, Governor of the People's Bank of China (PBC), the country's central bank, in March.

These bonds encompass corporate bonds, enterprise bonds and debt financing instruments issued by non-financial enterprises, read a notice issued by the PBC on May 7.

Issuers are encouraged to adopt flexible bond terms and to issue longer-maturity bonds, thereby better matching the characteristics and demands of fund utilization in the field of sci-tech innovation, it said.

Nearly 100 market institutions are preparing to issue more than 300 billion yuan ($42 billion) worth of sci-tech innovation bonds, with further participation expected in the future, according to the PBC.

Financial Support

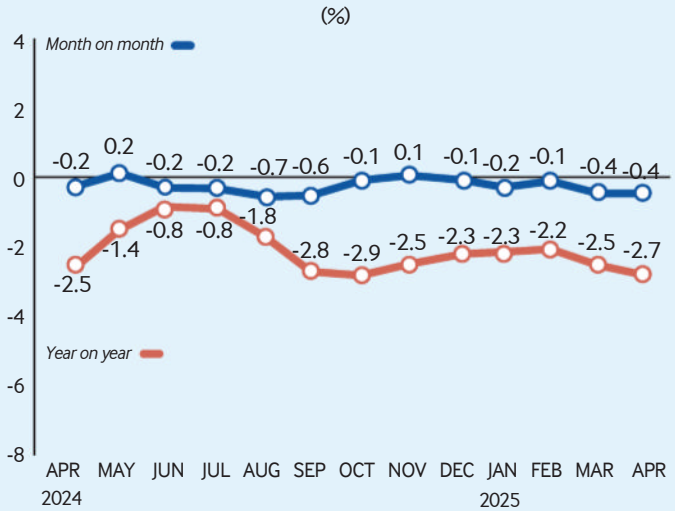
The PBC announced on May 9 that it has set up a relending facility for service consumption and elderly care, aiming to guide financial institutions in strengthening support for these sectors.

The relending facility quota for service consumption and elderly care is 500 billion yuan ($69 billion), and features an annual interest rate of 1.5 percent and a term of one year, according to the PBC.

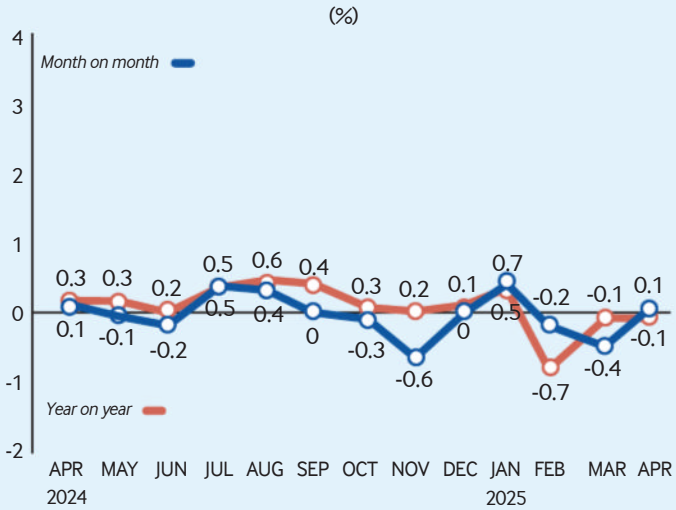
Eligible applicants for the facility comprise 21 national financial institutions, including

NUMBERS

China's Producer Price Index Growth



China's Consumer Price Index (CPI) Growth



policy banks and state-owned commercial banks, as well as five city commercial banks including Bank of Beijing and Bank of Shanghai, the central bank noted.

This relending facility will be in effect until the end of 2027, the PBC said, adding that it will encourage and guide financial institutions to beef up support for key areas in the service consumption sector—such as accommodation and food and beverage, culture, sports and entertainment, and education, as well as the elderly care industry.

Current Account Surplus

China reported a current account surplus of $165.6 billion in the first quarter of 2025, according to data released by the State Administration of Foreign Exchange.

The surplus in goods trade reached $237.6 billion during the period, while the country registered a $59.3-billion deficit in services trade.

In terms of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs), China's current account surplus reached 126.2 billion SDRs for the first three months.

The SDR is an interest-bearing international reserve asset created by the International Monetary Fund to supplement other reserve assets of member countries.

Media Revenue

The broadcasting and online audiovisual industry posted strong growth in 2024, fueled by a boom in micro-dramas and a steady rise in digital media consumption, according to an official report released on May 9.

The sector generated 1.29 trillion yuan ($178 billion) in revenue, a 5.27-percent increase from the previous year, the National Radio and Television Administration said in the report.

A notable highlight was the online content segment, including paid subscriptions and program copyrights, which brought in 183.1 billion yuan ($25 billion), up 34.6 percent year on year.

Micro-dramas, a fast-growing format tailored for mobile viewing, emerged as a potent engine for both innovation and profits. Revenues from short videos and livestreaming platforms remained strong, reaching 451.5 billion yuan ($62 billion), a 5.43-percent increase.

China's online entertainment sector continued its rapid growth in 2024. According to official data, authorities granted distribution licenses to 219 major online films, 166 web series, 659 animated productions and 602 micro-dramas over the course of the year.

Meanwhile, Chinese Internet users spent more than three hours a day on average watching online audiovisual content, reflecting the deepening role of digital platforms in everyday cultural consumption.

Property Rights Market

The property rights market registered over 113 million transactions nationwide last year, with total trading volume edging up 0.16 percent year on year to reach 25.42 trillion yuan ($3.52 trillion), data from the Chinese State-Owned Property Exchanges Association showed.

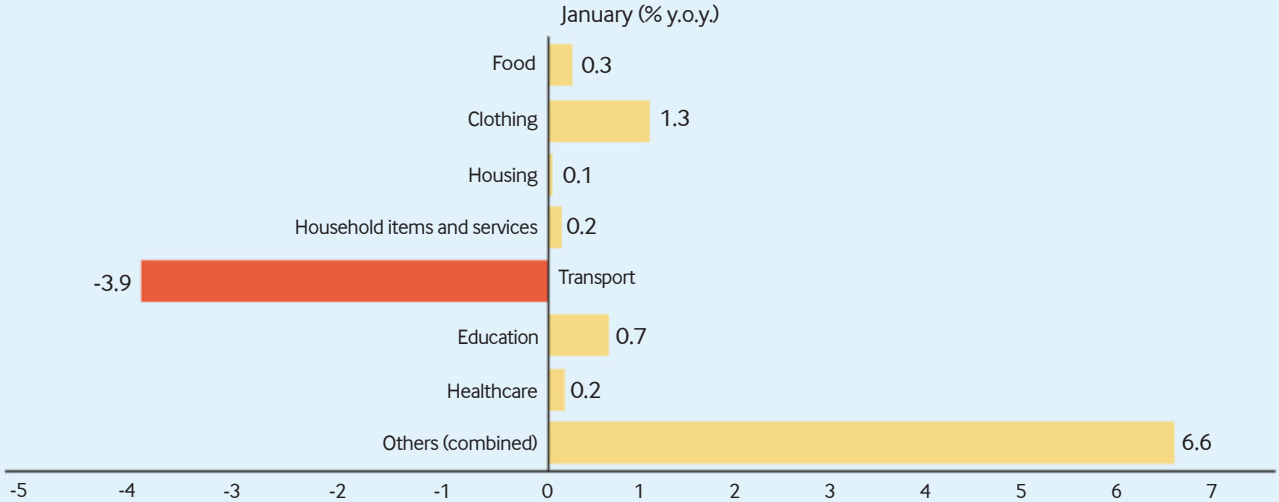
The data elements business, which was included in official statistics for the first time in 2023, recorded transactions worth 11.25 billion yuan ($1.56 billion).

More than 62,000 agriculture-related transactions were made last year, totaling 50.82 billion yuan ($7 billion) in value, a reflection of continued support for mobilizing rural assets and advancing rural revitalization.

China's rural revitalization aims to promote the economic prosperity and overall development of rural areas. It builds on the success of the nationwide poverty alleviation campaign that had eradicated absolute poverty as of late 2020.

China's CPI Growth by Type

January (% y.o.y.)



(Source: *National Bureau of Statistics*)

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UNITED KINGDOM

An information screen at Westminster Station shows suspended services on some tube lines and severe delays on others in London on May 12. A power outage struck the London Underground that day, causing widespread travel disruptions

ARGENTINA

Contestants on the dancefloor at the 21st World Tango Championship in Buenos Aires on May 8

XINHUA

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PAKISTAN

Residents of Multan celebrate on May 10 after Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar announced a ceasefire with India, which took immediate effect

IRAN

The 29th International Oil, Gas, Refining and Petrochemical Exhibition in Tehran on May 8

XINHUA

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VATICAN CITY

Pope Leo XIV, born Robert Francis Prevost in the U.S. city of Chicago, waves to the crowd after being elected as the successor to Pope Francis on May 8

XINHUA

SAUDI ARABIA

Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud meets with visiting U.S. President Donald Trump in Riyadh on May 13. Trump secured a $600-billion investment commitment during the trip

VETERAN NURSE AWARDED FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE MEDAL

Feng Ling is one of seven nurses from China to be awarded the Florence Nightingale Medal, one of the highest international distinctions for nursing professionals, in recognition of their contributions to health and care. The announcement was made as the world marked International Nurses Day on May 12.

Feng works at the AIDS Clinical Guidance and Training Center of Zhongnan Hospital of Wuhan University in Hubei Province. Dedicating 35 years to the prevention and care of infectious diseases, she has pioneered a multidisciplinary collaboration model for HIV/AIDS care and promoted organ transplantation for people living with HIV/AIDS.

Thirty-five nurses from 17 countries were honored this year, with China leading in the number of recipients. Since China first participated in the selection of the Florence Nightingale Medal in 1983, 97 of its nurses have received this prestigious award.

Stories That Scale

Global Times

May 14

Buoyed by wildly imaginative fantasies and emotionally charged romances, China's online literature industry has experienced explosive growth in recent years. Now valued at over 43 billion yuan ($6 billion), the market boasts a staggering overseas readership of more than 350 million, according to a recent report by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

No longer confined to the literary sphere, the genre has evolved into a vast multimedia ecosystem encompassing literature, film, animation, gaming and more.

This momentum extends far beyond China's borders. In 2024, overseas revenue exceeded $690 million, covering more than 200 countries and regions. The global boom has been aided in part by the rapid advancement of AI, which enables real-time translation and dramatically lowers the language barrier for international readers.

Still, challenges remain. The industry continues to grapple with clichéd storylines, uneven content quality and weak intellectual property protection.

Addressing these issues requires a thoughtful balance between AI-driven efficiency and human creativity, deeper investment in culturally distinctive narratives and stronger regulatory frameworks around copyright issues.

The New Wild

Lifeweek

May 5

With the goal of creating the world's largest national park system by 2035, China has been working on building its national park system atop a vast network of nature reserves. Where earlier efforts focused narrowly on protecting specific species or habitats, the new model embraces entire ecosystems—mountains, rivers, forests and grasslands—as interconnected entities.

This more holistic approach underpins the country's first five national parks,

"Instead of a sustained recovery following the period of exceptional crises of 2020-21, progress has been unexpectedly weak."

Farhan Haq, Deputy Spokesperson for UN Secretary General António Guterres, at a daily briefing on May 6, citing the 2025 Human Development Report released by the United Nations Development Programme. The report said human development progress is experiencing an unprecedented slowdown, making the smallest annual increase since 1990

"Technology should be a public good that is accessible to every individual and affordable for every small business."

Wang Jing, General Manager of Public Affairs at China's e-commerce and cloud computing giant Alibaba Group, on the sidelines of the 2025 World Brand Moganshan Conference, which took place on May 9-11

designated in 2021. That same year, at the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Kunming, Yunnan Province, the country highlighted the restoration of the Hainan gibbon, which primarily inhabits the Hainan Tropical Rainforest National Park, as a model of successful conservation. On the brink of extinction in the 1970s, the species had dwindled to just two family groups. A dedicated nature reserve was established in 1980, and after decades of protection and habitat recovery, a third family group emerged in 2011—making the Hainan gibbon the only one of the world's 20 gibbon species with a growing population.

Other parks tell similar stories. In the Giant Panda National Park, years of carefully managed habitat restoration have allowed the species' status to be downgraded from "endangered" to "vulnerable."

The challenge now is balancing protection and public engagement. A draft law on national parks, currently undergoing its second review, seeks to formalize this effort by transforming national parks into gateways through which people can experience nature, develop a deeper respect for it, and learn the principles of its preservation.

Keeping Pace With Marathon Mania

Economic Daily

May 12

Over the weekend of May 10 to 11, some 500,000 runners took to the streets across China in nearly 60 marathon events, which were held in not only some of the country's biggest cities, such as Beijing and Shanghai, but also its more remote corners.

This proliferation of marathon races is part of a wider boom of China's running industry. According to the Chinese Athletics Association, 749 races were held across the country in 2024, drawing more than 7 million participants, an increase of 1 million over the previous year. The top seven races, including the Shanghai Marathon, generated an average of 419 million yuan ($58 million) in direct economic profits.

Yet, capacity still lags behind demand. Although 60 marathon events over a single weekend was an impressive feat, many running enthusiasts were still unable to secure spots in these races, highlighting the need for increased access. Shorter-distance events, which have recently gained popularity, may offer fresh growth potential in a country swept up in a nationwide fitness wave.

While top-tier events are well organized, others suffer from a lack of clear oversight and quality service. As participation in these events continues to widen, the challenge will be not only to stage more races, but to ensure that standards keep pace with scale.

NEW NATIONAL SWIMMING COACH

Cui Dengrong has been appointed head coach of the Chinese national swimming team, the Swimming Management Center of the General Administration of Sport of China announced on May 14.

Born in Shanghai in 1969, Cui began his coaching career with the Shanghai swimming team in December 1990, and joined the national swimming team as a coach in 2009.

Cui has cultivated many outstanding swimmers. Among them, Qin Haiyang made history at the 2023 World Aquatics Championships in Fukuoka, Japan, by becoming China's first male world champion in breaststroke, and Zhang Yufei clinched the title in the women's 200-meter butterfly at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games and in the 100-meter butterfly at the Fukuoka World Aquatics Championships.

"The celebrations of the anniversary are not just about remembrance—they are also about honoring the sacrifice of millions in World War II by ensuring such global devastation never happens again."

Ana Vojinovic, head of the Communication and Promotion Department of Radio Television of Republika Srpska in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in an article about commemorating the 80th anniversary of the victory in the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War in 2025, published by Xinhua News Agency on May 13

"The games will demonstrate how close robots are to achieving human-like capabilities."

Jiang Guangzhi, Director of the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Economy and Information Technology, announcing at a press conference on May 7 that Beijing will host the 2025 World Robot Conference and the inaugural World Humanoid Robot Games in August

COVER STORY

FINDING THE SILVER LINING

China and the U.S. roll back tariffs in Geneva agreement but questions remain about their future ties and global impact By Zhao Wei

Cargo ships docked at the Port of Los Angeles in Los Angeles, California, the U.S., on May 10. California Governor Gavin Newsom criticized U.S. tariff policies in a May 11 interview, citing a 60-percent reduction in scheduled cargo ship arrivals statewide. Import volumes at the Port of Oakland fell 20 percent, while the Los Angeles-Long Beach Port Complex, handling 40 percent of U.S. imports, saw a 35-percent decline

XINHUA

A cautious optimism hung over the tranquil lakeside city of Geneva, Switzerland, on May 12, as negotiators from China and the U.S. emerged from talks to announce a breakthrough agreement. The agreement, unveiled after days of intense discussions, demonstrated an important easing of tensions since trade hostilities between the major countries flared up once again in early April, signaling a strategic recalibration by both global powers.

From May 10 to 11, Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng, the Chinese lead person for China-U.S. economic and trade affairs, led the country's delegation in extensive discussions with U.S. lead person Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer. The meetings were characterized by what both sides described as "candid, in-depth and constructive" exchanges, building on the momentum of the January 17 presidential call and resulting in a series of key consensuses aimed at stabilizing one of the world's most critical economic relationships.

Held in the city that is home to the World Trade Organization (WTO) headquarters, the high-level dialogue culminated in the release of the Joint Statement on China-U.S. Economic and Trade Meeting in Geneva. The statement outlined concrete steps to be implemented by May 14, including the suspension and cancellation of specific tariff measures, the creation of new bilateral mechanisms, and a commitment to ongoing dialogue on broader economic and trade issues.

Mutual respect

Featuring prominently in the joint statement released in Geneva, the phrase "mutual respect" resonated strongly on May 12, both during Bessent's media address, as well as in a concurrent briefing by China's Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM). For China, the term was more than diplomatic language—it signified a steadfast commitment to principle and strategic determination throughout the negotiation process.

This breakthrough emerged against the backdrop of a sharp escalation of trade tensions on April 2, when the U.S. introduced a new round of "reciprocal tariffs," warning that any retaliatory action would prompt further punitive responses. In defiance of that threat, China went on to launch three rounds of calibrated countermeasures, each tailored to address the evolving scope of U.S. actions.

In a major de-escalation effort, the joint statement declared that both nations will cancel 91 percent of the tariffs imposed during the latest two escalation rounds. Specifically, the agreement addressed the U.S.' imposition of 34-percent "reciprocal tariffs" announced in April. China responded by pledging to adjust its countermeasures in alignment with changes in the U.S. stance—suspending or retaining tariffs as appropriate.

At a press briefing on May 12, a spokesperson from MOFCOM confirmed the scope of the mutual rollback, noting that the move met the expectations of producers and consumers in both countries, and aligned not only with national interests but also with the shared interests of the global economy.

Throughout this phase of the trade dispute, China consistently upheld its opposition to unilateral tariff actions that contravened WTO rules, while exercising its legitimate right to respond. The U.S., in turn, retreated from its long-held position that it could impose duties without facing reciprocal actions—a departure from the confrontational posture it had maintained since 2018.

"I think one of the reasons why the negotiations achieved substantial progress is that both sides have adhered to the principles of mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation," said Huang Cheng, Deputy Executive Director of the Shanghai Institute of American Studies (SIAS), during opening remarks at a seminar themed At the Strategic Crossroads: China-U.S. Relations in the Trump 2.0 Era and the Future of Global Order. The event, held in Shanghai ▶▶

on May 14, was co-hosted by China International Communications Group Center for the Americas and SIAS.

Behind the tariffs truce

The joint statement issued in Geneva is a meaningful step toward dismantling unilateral tariffs that contravene WTO rules. Compared to the peak of trade tensions, both sides have now reduced tariffs by a combined 115 percent, a surprising and encouraging margin. These measures have eased the strain on China-U.S. economic relations and contributed positively to the broader stability of the global economy.

The recalibration of U.S. trade policy was, in large part, driven by mounting domestic pressures. American households have borne the brunt of elevated consumer prices and supply chain disruptions, making it increasingly difficult for policymakers in Washington to defend the tariff-heavy approach. Facing rising political and economic costs, the U.S. was compelled to reconsider its strategy.

"A very simple calculation shows that the U.S. economy depends far more on China than vice versa," said Zhang Weiwei, President of the China Institute at Fudan University, at the seminar. "I reached this conclusion four or five years ago. I said publicly that if the U.S. imposed a tariff war, both sides would suffer, but the U.S. would suffer more."

This assessment is supported by research from the Peterson Institute for International Economics, which reported in May 2024 that over 92 percent of tariff-related costs were ultimately borne by U.S. importers and consumers. The data demonstrated that the burden of tariffs was passed along the domestic supply chain, undermining the notion that such measures primarily harm exporting countries.

Moreover, U.S. efforts to reroute supply chains through "friend-shoring," relocating production to countries such as Mexico and Viet Nam, met with mixed results. Continued dependence on Chinese intermediate goods and the rising costs of manufacturing abroad hampered these attempts at economic realignment.

YIN KANG

More than 20 experts from China and the U.S. attend a seminar themed At the Strategic Crossroads: China-U.S. Relations in the Trump 2.0 Era and the Future of Global Order in Shanghai on May 14

On the other side of the Pacific, China's countermeasures demonstrated both resilience and strategic acumen. Tariffs targeting American exports were paired with export controls on rare earth elements critical to advanced U.S. military hardware. These actions underscored China's leverage and its ability to inflict targeted economic discomfort in response to pressure.

China's increasing economic and technological resilience is evident in its evolving and expanding trade partnerships. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) overtook the U.S. as China's second largest export destination in 2023. In the first four months of this year, total trade value between China and ASEAN reached 2.38 trillion yuan ($330 billion), an increase of 9.2 percent, accounting for 16.8 percent of China's total foreign trade value. It is a testament to China's successful diversification strategy.

"I think that, at the end of the day, once the dust settles, we must recognize the mutual interdependence of both sides," said Zhao Hai, Director of International Political Studies at the National Institute for Global Strategy under the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. "The success we've seen is the product of cooperation, globalized supply chains and financial interconnectivity."

Zhao acknowledged the complexities and shortcomings in bilateral trade development but emphasized the overall gains: "It has been a win-win situation. If domestic politics in the U.S. attempt to dismantle what has been achieved over the past 40 years, the consequences will speak for themselves."

XINHUA

World Trade Organization (WTO) Director General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala speaks during a press conference at the WTO headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, on April 16

Beyond Geneva: what's next?

Despite the optimism surrounding the Geneva agreement, deep-rooted structural tensions between China and the U.S. remain unresolved. One of the most immediate uncertainties is the fate of the currently suspended 24-percent "reciprocal tariffs" and China's corresponding countermeasures. These will be subject to a 90-day negotiation window, during which both sides will engage under a newly established Sino-U.S. trade consultation mechanism. Notably, the joint statement omits any reference to the so-called "fentanyl tariffs," suggesting that such contentious issues may be addressed via separate channels.

"While the U.S. appears to be in retreat, we should not take these developments for granted," cautioned Josef Gregory Mahoney, a professor of politics and international relations at East China Normal University at the seminar.

"We shouldn't assume further tariff reductions are imminent, nor expect a full reset in relations, despite the rhetoric from [U.S. President Donald] Trump himself."

Mahoney suggested that Trump, facing setbacks in other policy areas such as failing to influence the Federal Reserve's interest rate policy, may be using this partial retreat as a tactical maneuver to stimulate the U.S. economy.

He further warned that Washington could redirect its pressure toward other trading partners like Mexico and Canada, only to revisit a hardline stance against China should domestic or geopolitical calculations change.

For some observers, the root of the conflict extends far beyond tariffs or trade deficits. "The U.S.-China conflict isn't really about the trade balance," argued Benjamin Norton, an independent journalist and editor of the Geopolitical Economy Report, at the seminar. "At its core, it's about China's extraordinary economic and technological rise, something the U.S. simply does not want to see continue. This is not a country seeking equal-footed, constructive engagement."

Others pointed to the broader impact on people-to-people ties and academic exchanges. Professor Zheng Hua of Shanghai Jiao Tong University shared the example of a two-decade-long joint program with the University of Michigan that was abruptly terminated by the U.S. over unfounded concerns about Chinese students. "It was a genuinely win-win collaboration, Michigan earned significant revenues, and our students gained invaluable experience. If such programs vanish, how do we continue to understand one another?"

Chen Jiajun, Deputy Director of the Research Office at SIAS, emphasized that the current trade dialogue should not be viewed in isolation. "We tend to focus heavily on the economic dimension due to the trade war, but this is part of a much broader spectrum of strategic competition. In the past, economic issues could remain confined to economics. Today, that boundary is increasingly blurred. The trade consultation mechanism is not just a technocratic platform—it's now the central arena where the future contours of China-U.S. strategic relations will be defined."

With sobering reflection, Zhao emphasized China's current and future role. "In this difficult moment, China has shown leadership—perhaps, as some global media have put it, the only 'adult in the room.' But this phase is still highly unstable. Trump could find any excuse to reimpose tariffs, not only on China but on others as well."

According to Zhao, the way forward lies in strengthening domestic consumption, accelerating economic transformation and promoting the internationalization of the renminbi. More importantly, he urged China to embrace a larger global role.

"China has long identified itself as a developing country, which tends to focus more on its domestic development. But now, more countries are looking to China for leadership, peace-building, market access and development opportunities. It may be time for China to do more, not just for its own future, but for the world's," he said. **BR**

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COVER STORY

SEEKING BALANCE AMID CALLS FOR DE-ESCALATION

In an interview with *Beijing Review*, **Einar Tangen**, a senior fellow at the Taihe Institute, a Beijing-based think tank, and a seasoned independent economic commentator, shared his views on what the recent tariff pause between China and U.S. reveals about both sides' trade strategies, why U.S. tariffs fail to fix trade gaps and whether the 90-day reprieve can lead to lasting solutions. Edited excerpts of their conversation follow:

***Beijing Review*: During their recent high-level meeting on economic and trade affairs in Geneva, Switzerland, China and the U.S. agreed to de-escalate trade tensions by drastically rolling back tariffs on each other's goods for an initial 90-day period. What is your take on this move?**

Einar Tangen: President Donald Trump's administration tried a very big bluff. Just think of international trade as a game of poker where all the players' cards are visible. What countries import, export and consume is meticulously tracked and widely known.

Trump tried to convince the world he was holding a royal flush—the biggest hand in poker. But the rest of the players could see his cards and knew it wasn't true. Still, the sheer weight of America's political, economic and military power make others hesitant, and many nations weren't sure how to respond.

Meanwhile, China stepped up and called the U.S. bluff by saying that what the Trump administration has proposed simply doesn't add up.

If the goal is to reindustrialize America, then it means rebuilding infrastructure that already exists elsewhere, which will inevitably lead to overcapacity in the system. The U.S. is, in essence, stabbing itself while attempting to hurt others.

What China attempts to do is to bring the Trump administration back to reality—and that is exactly what we've seen unfold in these talks.

The question now comes to: How do you bring the U.S. back down to earth? No one wants the U.S. to play the military card. But neither can anyone afford to see it fail, as a collapse of the U.S. economy would be catastrophic. Trade routes would be disrupted, and the United States' colossal demand—still a major engine of global growth—would dwindle, which will affect the entire globe.

China, in many ways, has acted as the adult in the room by saying: "We didn't start this, but we have to figure out a way of containing the fallout—for our own sake, and for the stability of the global economy."

The country has consistently maintained that it is willing to talk but will not be talked down to, that negotiations must be conducted with mutual respect, and that real progress must be the goal.

What we are seeing are two fundamentally different visions of how trade should work. One is extractive. The U.S. favored tariffs, bilateral trade deals and asynchronous negotiations, where it uses its might to force its will upon others.

China, by contrast, has promoted a more collaborative approach. That model is reflected in initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative (a China-proposed initiative to boost connectivity along and beyond the ancient Silk Road routes—*Ed.*), the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (the world's largest free trade agreement covering the 10 Southeast Asian nations, China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Australia and New Zealand—*Ed.*) and its stated interest in formally joining the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (a free trade agreement consisting of 11 Asia-Pacific economies and the UK—*Ed.*).

One thing worth noting is that the talks were held in Geneva, where the World Trade Organization (WTO) is headquartered, a body China supports as essential to the multilateral trading system. At the heart of that system is the need for a fair mechanism for settling disputes—something the U.S. has continuously undermined by blocking the appointment of judges to the WTO's Appellate

Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange in New York, the United States, on May 12. U.S. stocks rallied sharply that day, after China and the U.S. announced a temporary rollback of "reciprocal tariffs," providing much-needed relief to investors concerned about the escalating trade war's economic fallout

Body (the global trading system's final tribunal of appeal—*Ed.*).

A location like this clearly shows China's support for the multilateral trading order. In an era of great economic upheavals, we need a framework that promotes dialogue instead of confrontation, and talks instead of tariffs.

The U.S. Government pointed to its trade deficit with China as a key justification for imposing what it called "reciprocal tariffs." But that raises a critical question: Are tariffs really an effective tool for addressing trade imbalances?

The short answer is no. To understand why, we need to look at why the trade deficit exists in the first place.

The U.S. has an ongoing trade gap because it consumes more than it produces. A major factor behind that imbalance is the strength of the U.S. dollar. A strong dollar makes American goods more expensive to produce at home and less competitive in markets overseas.

A fact that the U.S. Government doesn't want to admit is the steady erosion of the American middle class. In 1971, 61 percent of Americans were considered middle class. By 2024, that number had dropped to just 40 percent. That is a one third decline—and it has serious consequences.

Democracy functions best when most people feel invested in the future, when they have a stake in the system and something to lose, when they are willing to put aside their immediate needs in order to build a better future for their children and grandchildren.

But when people are just trying to survive—when their backs are against the wall and their jobs hang in the balance—they don't have the luxury of investing in a better future. And for many Americans today, that's the reality.

The central problem here is a refusal to reflect. The narrative often pushed is that China somehow "stole" American jobs, as if the latter crept in overnight and gathered up all the jobs—a tale that doesn't even make sense. At their core, America's problems stem from the shortcomings of its own system.

And until we recognize that, I'm afraid there isn't much progress to be made. China may try to play the adult in the room, but it is dealing with a spoiled child that does not want to reflect on its own actions.

Looking ahead, what do you expect to see during the 90-day tariff reprieve and beyond?

During the China-U.S. trade talks, the entire world was waiting to see how China would respond, and what the outcome would be. Now, I can say with confidence that there is a shared sense of relief. It wasn't just the market sector that breathed a sigh of relief; it was the international community as a whole. There is a sense that there finally is a starting point from which meaningful negotiations can take shape.

What I expect is a push for a universal, across-the-board deal. If the U.S. wants to impose a 10-percent tariff, fine; that cost will ultimately be passed on to American consumers, and that's their choice.

But a uniform 10 percent is something other countries can work with. The key is uniformity; it spares businesses from the chaos of constantly adapting to shifting rules and wasting resources just to navigate an unpredictable political landscape.

In the meantime, China is likely to push for a Phase Two agreement. Under the Phase One agreement, which took effect in 2020, China agreed to expand purchases of certain U.S. goods and services, primarily energy and agricultural products. That deal showed some initial progress, but ultimately faltered due to the COVID-19 pandemic and actions by the Trump administration. Now, signs point to a renewed effort.

In return, the U.S. should refrain from continuing its economic bullying. The country has to start to realize that it is not the ruler of the world, but a member of an economically, politically and culturally interconnected community.

My hope for the U.S. is that it will abandon all of the previous nonsense and take a new path. Instead of trying to reindustrialize the country, it could embrace digital development, expand access to quality education and build a system that supports the most vulnerable.

There's an old saying that a society isn't judged by how it treats the powerful, but by how it treats the powerless. In the U.S., we know the words—we quote them often. The real challenge now is to start living by them. **BR**

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BRIDGING THE PACIFIC

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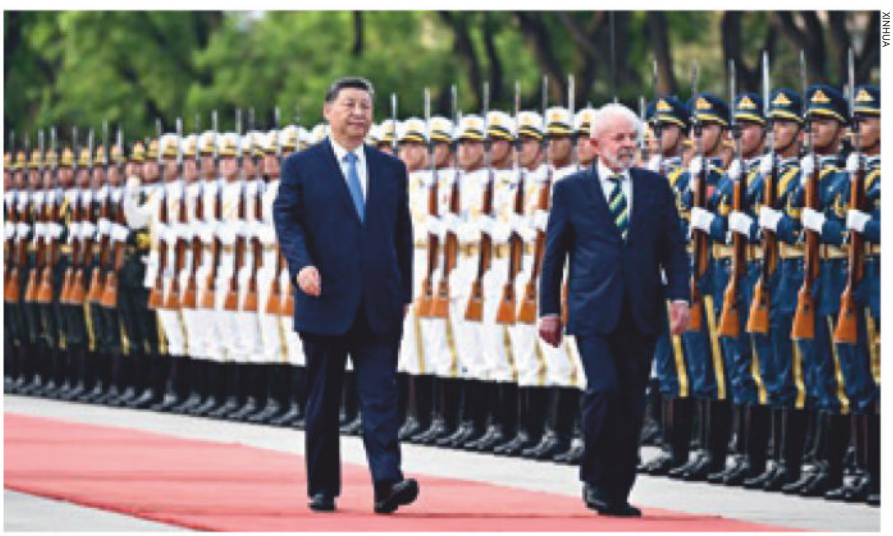
Decoding Lula's High-Stakes China Visit

By Li Renfang



XINHUA

Chinese President Xi Jinping hosts a welcome ceremony for Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva prior to their talks in Beijing on May 13

From May 10 to 14, Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva visited China for the sixth time. During his stay, Chinese leaders held meetings with Lula to discuss consolidating the China-Brazil Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and aligning their development strategies. The leaders also exchanged views on addressing external challenges brought about by the policies of U.S. President Donald Trump's administration.

Additionally, President Lula attended the Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the Forum of China and Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (China-CELAC Forum) and participated in a series of bilateral economic and trade activities.

Political and economic context

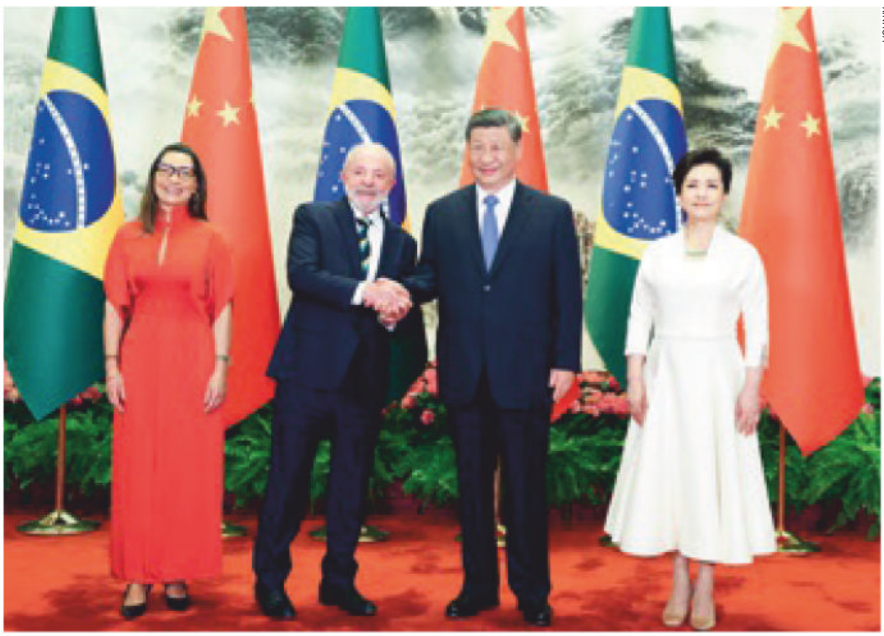
Brazil is currently facing economic pressures from fiscal capacity, interest rates and foreign trade. The Brazilian Government's fiscal stress has made it difficult for Lula's administration to implement further economic stimulus measures. Meanwhile, domestic interest rates remain high and show signs of rising. Due to the previous appreciation of the U.S. dollar, Brazil faces considerable inflationary pressure. The Central Bank of Brazil has raised interest rates six consecutive times, resulting in higher financing costs that suppress both business investment and household consumption.

The Trump administration's recent tariffs have directly impacted Brazilian exports, while the U.S. Federal Reserve's refusal to cut interest rates has further exacerbated inflationary pressure in Brazil. These have added external policy risks to its exports.

According to a report by the Central Bank of Brazil in March, under the impact of the U.S.' tariffs on steel and aluminum, Brazil's economy is projected to grow by 1.99 percent in 2025, 0.02 percentage points lower than previous forecasts. During the same period, the inflation rate is expected to reach 5.66 percent. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) also predicts that Brazil's benchmark interest rate may need to increase by another 1.25 to 1.5 percentage points. According to the OECD, loan interest rates for Brazilian companies are already high, and further increases could worsen private sector debt risks.

Given the circumstances, Brazil is eager to reach more economic cooperation agreements with China. It hopes to secure a larger share of the Chinese market and attract Chinese investment. During the U.S.-inflicted trade war against China in 2018, Brazil's exports to China grew sharply. Although Brazil is currently impacted by Trump's tariffs, Lula's administration remains optimistic about expanding its market presence in China.

Brazil's Minister of Mines and Energy Alexandre Silveira described the tariff war initiated by Trump as an "opportunity" for Brazil. Roberto Perosa, head of the Brazilian Association of Meat Exporting Industries (ABIEC), believes the country has the potential to become a long-term and reliable supplier of agricultural and livestock products to Asian markets, particularly China. He sees the changing trade landscape as providing unprecedented opportunities for China-Brazil cooperation. Additionally, Brazil's Minister of Agriculture and Livestock Carlos Fávaro emphasized the urgent need for his country to expand its agricultural exports to China to offset the



XINHUA

Chinese President Xi Jinping and his wife Peng Liyuan pose for a photo with Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and his wife Rosangela da Silva in Beijing on May 13

export losses caused by the steep U.S. tariffs.

Amid the impact of unilateral policies, emerging economies like Brazil are actively seeking common development, aiming to reconstruct global supply chains. Attracting Chinese investment to Brazil and promoting China-Brazil strategic cooperation were key objectives of Lula's visit, during which China and Brazil signed cooperation agreements in agriculture, green energy and technology, among other sectors.

Lula's administration has consistently championed "multilateral diplomacy" and "South-South cooperation" and emphasized its independent foreign policy. In his third term, Lula reinstated Brazil's membership in the CELAC and advocated for strengthening the BRICS mechanism. (BRICS is a 10-member group of emerging economies originally consisting of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa—*Ed.*)

His visit to China came at a time of considerable China-U.S. tensions and global economic uncertainty fueled by Trump's tariffs. The trip is seen as a step toward Global South cooperation in addressing international challenges and enhancing its voice in global governance.

Recent China policy

Under Lula, Brazil has adopted a foreign policy that markedly differs from that of his predecessor, Jair Bolsonaro. It stresses national self-reliance and strategic autonomy, seeks to position Brazil as an independent coordinator among global powers, and fosters multilateral cooperation aligned with its national interests. Central to this approach is a commitment to solidarity with Global South nations, including China.

Recognizing China's status as Brazil's largest trading partner, Lula's government views strengthening ties with Beijing as more pragmatic than aligning unconditionally with the U.S. The two nations share robust cooperation in infrastructure, energy and technological innovation. Amid shifting global trade dynamics, their economic interdependence continues to grow.

In contrast, current U.S. foreign policy, characterized by protectionist measures, has introduced volatility into global supply chains and economic systems. The "America First" doctrine has led to diminished economic engagement with Latin American countries and the imposition of stricter trade restrictions on some nations. In the face of these challenges, Lula's administration is proactively expanding Brazil's international partnerships to ensure greater resilience and strategic flexibility.

Key takeaways

Lula's recent visit to China underscores a strong commercial agenda aimed at expanding exports and attracting Chinese investment to counteract challenges posed by U.S. trade protectionism.

Brazil is eager to attract Chinese investment in its infrastructure and energy sectors. Discussions have focused on enhancing Brazil's power grid infrastructure to facilitate a transition to green energy. Both governments and enterprises from the two sides have already held discussions on cooperation in railways, highways, energy and power grids.

In terms of industrial transformation and technological innovation, China and Brazil aim to deeply integrate their industrial chains, promoting technology transfer, supply chain improvements and investment. Over the past year, Brazil has selected numerous cooperation options in strategic areas such as photovoltaics, semiconductors, energy and automobiles under its industrial policy of the New Industry Brazil, and Chinese and Brazilian companies are expected to engage in deeper cooperation in these fields.

The leaders of China and Brazil also held discussions on agricultural cooperation, as Brazil remains China's largest source of soybean imports.

Without a doubt, this visit will deepen traditional friendship, elevate bilateral cooperation and foster positive change in the political and economic landscape both regionally and globally. **BR**

The author is an associate professor of economics at the Center for Latin-American and Caribbean Studies at Southwest University of Science and Technology
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Future-Facing Partnership

By Zhang Shasha

Just as a ship is powered by its sails, people are inspired by their hearts. On November 15, 2024, President Xi Jinping quoted this Latin American proverb in his written speech delivered at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation CEO Summit. He called on all nations to enhance solidarity and cooperation, jointly stand up to global challenges and form a mighty force for the common prosperity of the world and a brighter future for humanity.

The world today is undergoing profound changes unseen in a century. The Global South, or the nations of the world considered to have a relatively low level of economic and industrial development and typically located to the south of more industrialized nations, including China and countries in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), is rising with growing strength and influence.

Amid shifting international dynamics, China-LAC relations have entered a new phase—one grounded in equality, mutual benefit, innovation and openness and with a focus on delivering real benefits to the people, setting a new benchmark for South-South cooperation.

In July 2014, during his visit to Brasília, capital of Brazil, Xi attended the China-LAC Countries Leaders' Meeting, where he first proposed building a China-LAC community with a shared future. Together with the attending leaders, he announced the establishment of the Forum of China and Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).

In January 2015, the First Ministerial Meeting of the China-CELAC Forum was held in Beijing. This was the beginning of overall cooperation between China and LAC countries. "The China-CELAC Forum, a young seedling in our eyes, needs the dedication and cultivation of both sides for it to grow bigger and stronger." These remarks, delivered by Xi at the opening ceremony, embodied his high hopes for the forum's enduring success.

Today, that once-tender seedling has grown into a flourishing tree—lush, robust and thriving. From vision to reality, from concept to concrete action, the China-CELAC Forum has become the leading platform for advancing overall cooperation between China and LAC countries, aligning development strategies on both sides, and building a shared future for the China-LAC community.

Over the past decade, under the framework of the China-CELAC Forum, the two sides have continuously deepened political mutual trust and expanded practical cooperation. Panama, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras have established or resumed diplomatic ties with China. The latter has firmly held its position as the LAC's second largest trading partner, while Chile, Peru, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Nicaragua have all become China's free trade partners.

In November 2024, the Chancay Port in Peru officially commenced operations. This milestone not only bears testament to how the Belt and Road Initiative, a China-proposed strategy to boost connectivity along and beyond the ancient Silk Road routes, has made a difference in Peru, but also celebrates the birth of a new land-sea corridor between Asia and LAC countries in the new era.

Over the past decade, China and LAC nations, as part of the Global South, have remained committed to safeguarding world peace and promoting shared development. In May 2024, China and Brazil jointly issued the Common Understandings on Political Settlement of the Ukraine Crisis, which received positive responses from more than 110 countries. For Caribbean nations grappling with severe threats stemming from climate change, China has extended climate assistance through both bilateral and multilateral channels.

The Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the China-CELAC Forum took place in Beijing on May 13. China has expressed its readiness to work with partners in the region to promote progress in building a China-LAC community with a shared future. Together, they seek to address global challenges, promote reforms in global governance and contribute wisdom and strength to maintaining world peace and stability.

With a steady hand on the wheel and a strong wind in the sails, the journey is set to soar. At this new historic juncture, China and the LAC continue to meet each other half way despite the vast ocean that sets them apart. In the spirit of the proverb "just as a ship is powered by its sails, people are inspired by their hearts," the China-LAC community with a shared future is poised for a steady and prosperous voyage, charting a new course for bilateral relations. **BR**

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Cracking Down on the Smuggling of Strategic Minerals

By Lan Xinzhen

A special on-site meeting was held on May 9 in Shenzhen of Guangdong Province to combat the smuggling of strategic minerals. The meeting was convened by the national export control work coordination office and joined by the Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM), the Ministry of Public Security and the Ministry of State Security. According to information from MOFCOM, the special campaign aims to prevent the illegal outflow of strategic minerals, crack down on the smuggling of these critical resources and thereby safeguard national security.

Minerals such as gallium, germanium, antimony and graphite are listed as national strategic mineral resources for their indispensable and important position in the application of modern technologies. China is a major supplier of these rare metal minerals. For example, China's gallium ore reserves are 190,000 tons, accounting for around 80 percent of the world's total, according to an article published in Beijing-based magazine *Scientific and Cultural Popularization of Natural Resources* in 2020. With rich strategic mineral resources and advanced mining technologies, China has gradually acquired an international leading position in these fields. However, as mining these strategic minerals causes damage to the environment, while providing these resources to the international community, China must also invest more energy and resources into restoring the ecosystems of the mined areas.

The U.S. and other Western countries have taken several suppression measures in recent years, including putting some Chinese firms on sanction lists and unjustly restricting the export of some products to China, which

has led the country to use export control as a countermeasure. Considering its national strategic security, the need for ecological protection and these suppression measures, China imposed export controls on gallium and germanium, as well as related technologies, on August 1, 2023. In August 2024 and this February, it announced export controls on more metal minerals such as tungsten, tellurium and bismuth, as well as related products. Export operators who export without permission, beyond the permitted scope or are engaged in other illegal activities will be subject to administrative penalties or criminal responsibilities in accordance with law.

However, since the export control measures were implemented, some foreign entities have, colluding with domestic lawbreakers, attempted to circumvent export control measures through smuggling and other means. In response, the related departments have organized an international campaign to crack down on the smuggling of strategic minerals, taking swift action targeting fraudulent reporting, smuggling, third-country transshipments and other related illegal activities. Through interdepartmental investigation and more rigorous inspections to uncover the illicit networks and entities behind these schemes, China will make its export control law enforcement more effective and safeguard its national security development interests.

In the current context, where global multilateral trade is affected by the U.S. "reciprocal tariffs" and attempts at technological containment of China, this campaign against the smuggling of strategic minerals is of great importance. Strategic mineral resources play an indispensable role in maintaining the country's economic security and national defense. The illegal export of strategic minerals may lead to resource shortages in related domestic industries and affect the steady development of these industries. Cracking down on smuggling is conducive to maintaining domestic market order, ensuring the normal operation of related industries and thereby safeguarding national economic security.

Some misguided comments on the Internet claim that China's export controls on strategic minerals encourage smuggling. This is a wrong understanding. Export control on strategic minerals is a normal practice in global trade, and the U.S., Europe, Japan and other countries also have their respective lists of critical minerals. It is even more inappropriate to excuse these smuggling activities, as compliance with law and regulations should be an established norm in modern international multilateral trade. **BR**

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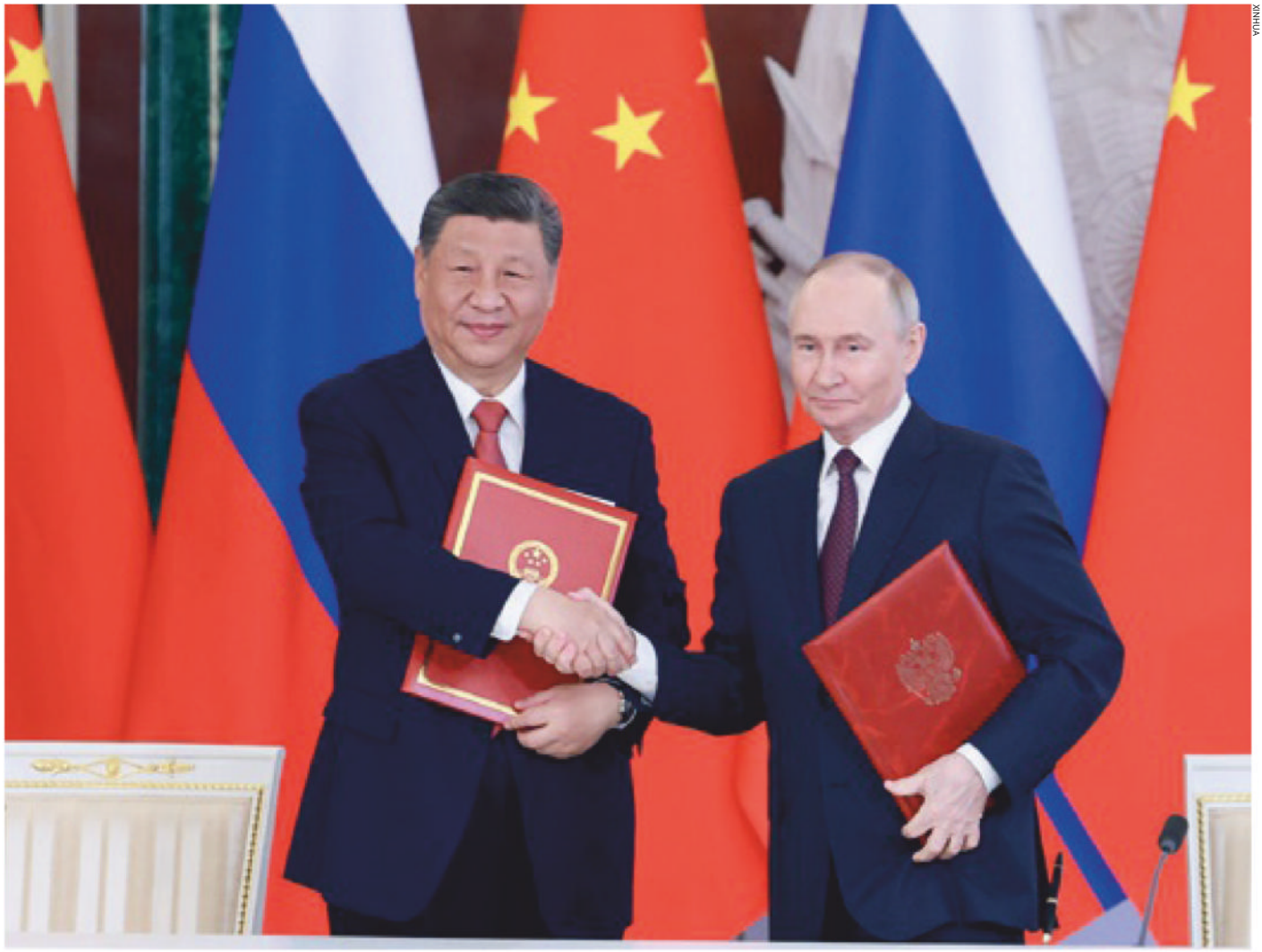

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Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin pose for the press after signing a joint statement on further deepening the China-Russia comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination for a new era in Moscow, Russia, on May 8

A Broader Path

China, Russia to shoulder special responsibility amid rising unilateralism

By Ma Miaomiao

Beneath the grandeur of Red Square in Moscow, banners of victory danced in the breeze, and medals of glory sparkled in the light. As the stirring strains of *Katyusha*, a popular Russian wartime song, filled the air, a proud phalanx of Russian women soldiers marched forth in noble review. A decade ago, to that same melody, the resolute steps of the Guard of Honor of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) echoed across this historic square, their presence etched into proud memory.

On May 9, Chinese President Xi Jinping rose from his seat as the PLA unit passed through the square. He joined Russian President Vladimir Putin and more than 20 other leaders for the celebrations marking the 80th anniversary of the victory in the Soviet Union's Great Patriotic War, during his state visit to the country

at Putin's invitation.

While holding talks with Putin on May 8, Xi called for promoting the correct historical perspective on World War II (WWII), maintaining the authority and status of the United Nations (UN), and safeguarding international justice and fairness.

In the face of the countercurrent of unilateralism and the act of power politics and bullying in the world, China will work with Russia to shoulder their special responsibility as major countries of the world and permanent members of the UN Security Council, Xi added.

The two leaders exchanged in-depth views on bilateral ties and major international and regional issues, reaching consensus on unwaveringly deepening strategic coordination and promoting the stable, healthy and high-level development of China-Russia relations.

Robust ties

The visit is Xi's 11th trip to Russia since he became Chinese president in 2013 and the two heads of state have met more than 40 times on various occasions.

China and Russia have found a correct path for state-to-state interactions between neighboring major countries, Xi said in a written statement upon his arrival in Moscow on May 7.

The two countries, as good neighbors that cannot be moved apart, true friends who share weal and woe, and good partners of mutual achievement, have forged a spirit of strategic coordination for a new era, which features permanent good-neighborly friendship, comprehensive strategic coordination and mutually beneficial cooperation, he added.

According to the General Administration of Customs of China, two-way trade amounted to more than $244 billion in 2024, making China the largest trading partner of Russia for 15 consecutive years.

The two nations have achieved positive cooperation outcomes in traditional areas of strength such as energy, agriculture, aerospace and infrastructure, while demonstrating robust momentum in emerging fields like cross-border e-commerce and green development, Sun Zhuangzhi, Director of the Institute of Russian, Eastern European and Central Asian Studies of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), told *Beijing Review*.

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Chinese and Russian musicians perform at the Eternal Remembrance concert commemorating the 80th anniversary of the victory in the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the Soviet Union's Great Patriotic War in St. Petersburg, Russia, on April 25

The long-lasting friendship between the two neighbors has grown increasingly popular among their peoples. The mutual visa exemption agreement for group tours—signed in 2000, suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic and resumed in 2023—has greatly increased cross-border tourism. Hundreds of cultural events have been held in succession within the framework of the China-Russia Years of Culture in 2024 and 2025.

While talking with Putin, Xi said the two sides should stick to the general course of cooperation and fend off external disruptions, so as to solidify the foundation for stable collaboration and ensure stronger momentum for progress.

Both should take the synergies between the Belt and Road Initiative (a China-proposed initiative to boost connectivity along and beyond the ancient Silk Road routes) and the Eurasian Economic Union (a Russia-led regional economic bloc aiming to optimize the flow of goods and services among its members, with the other four being Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan) as a platform to build a high-standard connectivity pattern, Xi said, adding that the two sides should closely coordinate and cooperate on multilateral platforms such as the UN, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (an Eurasian political, economic and security organization) and BRICS (a group of emerging economies originally consisting of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), unite the Global South (which consists of nations that are generally characterized by relatively low levels of economic and industrial development, typically located to the south of more industrialized nations), uphold true multilateralism, and steer in the right direction of global governance reform.

Cherishing history

"History is the life of nations and of humanity," the great Russian author Leo Tolstoy wrote in *War and Peace*.

On the night of May 8, 1945, Germany signed▶▶

the surrender document in Karlshorst, Berlin, marking the end of WWII in Europe. Meanwhile in Moscow, it was already May 9, which was designated by the Soviet Union and later Russia as Victory Day. Since 1995, Russia has been holding military parades and other commemorative events every year on May 9.

This year is also the 80th anniversary of the victory in the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War. The Soviet Union was the principal theater of WWII in Europe, losing 27 million lives, while China was the main theater in Asia, suffering 35 million casualties in its resistance against the bulk of Japanese militarist forces.

Together, the two countries served as the mainstay of resistance against Japanese militarism and German Nazism, making pivotal contributions to the victory in the World Anti-Fascist War.

In a signed article published in the *Russian Gazette* newspaper ahead of his arrival in Moscow, Xi recalled that 10 years ago, he came to Russia to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the victory. During that visit, he met with 18 representatives of Russian veterans who endured the blood and fire of battlefields during the Soviet Union's Great Patriotic War and the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression.

"Their unyielding resolve and indomitable bearing left an indelible impression on me," Xi wrote. "Heroes never perish; their noble spirit lives forever."

"Any attempt to distort the historical truth of WWII, deny its victorious outcome, or defame the historic contribution of China and the Soviet Union is doomed to fail," Xi added.

Andrey Denisov, First Deputy Chair of Russia's Federation Council Committee on Foreign Affairs and former Russian Ambassador to China, applauded Xi's notion of upholding a correct view of WWII history.

"Safeguarding the truth of historical memory and revisiting those moments that connect our two countries and peoples holds special significance," Denisov told Xinhua News Agency.

After their talks, Xi and Putin signed a joint statement on further deepening the China-Russia comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination for a new era. Li Yonghui, a research fellow at the CASS Institute of Russian, Eastern European and Central Asian Studies, told *Beijing Review* that the joint statement not only represents a shared commemoration of history but also a strategic blueprint for the future development of bilateral relations, reflecting the sense of responsibility and vision for cooperation between China and Russia amid profound global changes.

The opening section of the joint statement emphasizes the enormous sacrifices and contributions made by China and Russia to the cause of global peace during WWII, and highlights plans for joint commemorative activities to urge the international community to remember the lessons of history.

This part of the document counters historical nihilism, as China and Russia work to correct attempts by some countries to distort the facts of WWII and glorify aggression, Li explained, adding it reinforces shared values—the principles of peaceful coexistence and multilateralism established by the victory in the World Anti-Fascist War remain central to today's international order.

The joint statement also proposes to deepen people-to-people ties, consolidating the social foundation of bilateral relations through initiatives like historical education and youth exchanges, she added.

Aircraft fly in formation during a military parade marking the 80th anniversary of the victory in the Soviet Union's Great Patriotic War in Moscow on May 9

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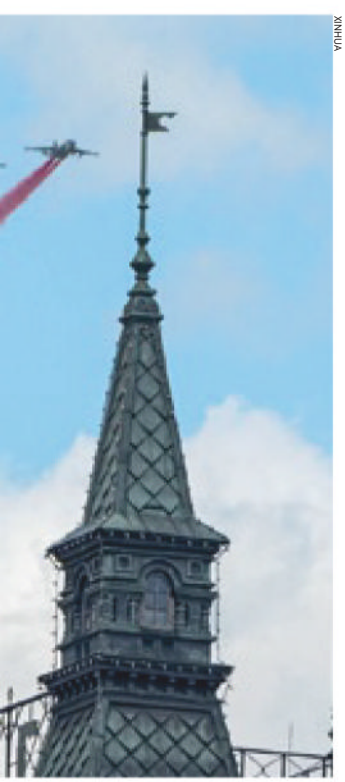

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The Guard of Honor of the Chinese People's Liberation Army attend a grand parade marking the 80th anniversary of the victory in the Soviet Union's Great Patriotic War in Moscow on May 9

Upholding multilateralism

Twelve years ago, during Xi's visit to Russia, Putin hosted a welcome banquet where the band played *Katyusha*. This time, when Xi had successfully completed all his scheduled activities and was about to depart for home, the Russian military band once again played the song to pay tribute to the two countries' shared victory and to their profound friendship.

Xi's recent visit to Russia further strengthened the political mutual trust between the two countries, clarified the future direction and key areas of bilateral cooperation, deepened cultural and people-to-people exchange, solidified public support in both nations, boosted international confidence in China-Russia relations, and promoted greater collaboration and coordination between the two sides in international affairs, Li said.

Both sides have repeatedly emphasized that China and Russia, as independent forces in the advancement of a multipolar world, should uphold the authority of the UN, Sun said, adding that they expressed their willingness to strengthen coordination within the frameworks of the UN Security Council, the UN General Assembly and other UN bodies, in order to promote fair and lasting solutions to global issues.

"The more turbulent and complex the international situation becomes, the more we must uphold and defend the authority of the UN," Xi wrote in his signed article.

The world needs justice, not hegemonism, Xi said, adding that history and reality have proven that to meet global challenges, it is important to uphold the vision of global governance featuring extensive consultation and joint contribution for shared benefit.

It is equally important to practice true multilateralism, accommodate the legitimate concerns of all parties and safeguard international norms and order, he said.

When jointly meeting the press with Putin after their talks at the Kremlin, Xi said as forces for stability, progress and development in the international community, China and Russia should continue to firmly stand together, resolutely safeguard the UN-centered international system and the international order underpinned by international law, and continuously promote an equal and orderly multipolar world.

"The establishment of an international system with the UN at its core is not easy at all, and must be firmly maintained by all countries of the world," Ekaterina Zaklyazminskaya, leading researcher at the Institute of China and Modern Asia at the Russian Academy of Sciences, told Xinhua.

"Russia and China support true multilateralism, which is very important at this time," she added. **BR**

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A Decade of Development

China-CELAC Forum celebrates milestones in South-South cooperation

By Li Wenhan

In 2015, when the First Ministerial Meeting of the Forum of China and Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) took place, Chinese President Xi Jinping set the goal for bilateral trade between China and Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) countries to reach $500 billion within 10 years.

That vision, seen as somewhat bold then, is now reality. Trade between China and LAC countries has more than doubled, jumping from $257 billion in 2013 to $518 billion in 2024.

"I believe that this meeting will yield rich results and send to the world a strong message of our commitment to deepening cooperation for common development," Xi said 10 years ago.

That commitment was reaffirmed this month, during the fourth ministerial meeting, convened in Beijing on May 13. Xi hosted Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and other leading officials from LAC countries to unveil new initiatives and measures to promote closer ties, and called on the two sides to jointly write a new chapter in building the China-LAC community with a shared future.

Formally established in 2011, CELAC is an intergovernmental mechanism for dialogue and political agreement, which comprises 33 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Roadmap for cooperation

Xi delivered a keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the meeting, which was attended by guests including President Lula, Colombian President Gustavo Petro, Chilean President Gabriel Boric and New Development Bank President Dilma Rousseff. "In the next three years, to facilitate our exchanges on national governance best practices, China will invite 300 members from political parties of CELAC member states every year to visit China," he said.

Xi called on both sides to uphold the multilateral trading system and promote cooperation and an open international environment. Apart from cooperation in traditional areas such as infrastructure, agriculture and food, and energy and minerals, he emphasized the importance of expanding cooperation in emerging areas including clean energy, 5G telecommunications, the digital economy and AI.

Xi announced the launch of five programs to advance shared development and revitalization with LAC countries. The programs cover areas including solidarity, civilization and development, peace and people-to-people connectivity.

He announced a 66-billion-yuan ($9 billion) credit line to support LAC countries' development, and told the guests that China would also import more from LAC countries and encourage its firms to boost investment.

To facilitate friendly exchange, China has decided to implement visa exemption for five LAC countries as the first step, with plans to extend this policy to other LAC countries in due course, he said.

China will expand its visa-free policy for ordinary passport holders from Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Peru and Uruguay, from June 1, 2025, to May 31, 2026.

"China and the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean are important members of the Global South. Independence is our glorious tradition, development and revitalization our natural right, and fairness and justice our common pursuit," Xi noted.

The meeting took place against the backdrop of the United States' sweeping tariffs on nations around the world.

Just one day before the event, on May 12, trade talks between China and the U.S. concluded on a positive note. Both countries issued a joint statement emphasizing the importance of building a sustainable, long-term, and mutually beneficial economic and trade relationship.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi presided over the meeting. Noting that this year is the 10th anniversary of the official launch of the China-CELAC Forum, Wang said over the past decade, the forum has become an important platform for equal dialogue and mutually beneficial cooperation between China and LAC countries.

Chinese President Xi Jinping and other participants pose for a group photo at the opening ceremony of the Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the Forum of China and Community of Latin American and Caribbean States in Beijing on May 13

Wang also said cooperation between China and LAC countries refuses bloc confrontation and advocates openness and win-win results, setting a new model for building a new type of international relations and providing fresh impetus for Global South cooperation.

The meeting adopted the Beijing Declaration and the China-CELAC Joint Action Plan for Cooperation in Key Areas (2025-27). The Beijing Declaration reaffirms both sides' commitment to peace, development and cooperation, while the other outlines specific initiatives in areas such as technology, trade, investment, infrastructure and Belt and Road cooperation, Assistant Foreign Minister Miao Deyu explained at a news briefing on May 11.

Colombia officially joined the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), a China-proposed initiative to boost connectivity along and beyond the ancient Silk Road routes, on May 14, describing the signing of the agreement as a historic step that could shape the country's course in the 21st century.

"The history of our foreign relations is changing," President Petro wrote in a post on the social media platform X, sharing a video of the signing of the BRI cooperation plan on that same day. "From now on, Colombia will interact with the entire world on a footing of equality and freedom."

Common development

China has long been the primary buyer of raw materials from LAC countries, importing vast quantities of copper, iron ore and other minerals. Its trade relationship with Brazil, in particular, stands out.

China is Brazil's largest export market by a considerable margin, driven predominantly by commodities including soybeans, iron ore and crude oil. In 2024 alone, China purchased $37 billion worth of soybeans from Brazil, solidifying its role as China's primary soybean supplier, as the world's largest soybean consumer diversifies away from reliance on the U.S.

This deepening economic partnership is part of a broader shift in China-LAC relations. According to Zhou Mi, a senior research fellow at the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation, the next decade will see economic and trade cooperation between China and LAC countries extend beyond traditional bilateral agreements. "We are likely to witness more regional collaboration and shared development," Zhou told *Beijing Review*.

拉美和加勒比国家共同体论坛第四届部长级会议
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LAC countries are expected to pursue diversified growth strategies, tailored to their own unique characteristics and needs. Zhou emphasized that smaller enterprises and regions with relatively low levels of economic openness may gain greater opportunities from these evolving partnerships.

The momentum continued during the China-Brazil Business Forum held in Beijing on May 12, where President Lula underscored the strength of Sino-Brazilian ties. "The relationship between Brazil and China will be unbreakable, as both sides need each other," Lula declared. He added that as long as the two nations work together, the Global South will achieve unprecedented respect on the world stage.

This sentiment is mirrored in the Beijing Declaration. Writing for news portal Brasil 247, Leonardo Attuch, the portal's founder and CEO, described the declaration as opening a "historical window" for LAC countries to envision a new path—not merely a geopolitical shift, but a paradigm shift.

"China—the world's second largest economy, the engine of global growth and a leader in the Global South—doesn't impose, doesn't threaten, doesn't sanction, doesn't invade. It proposes partnerships. It builds bridges. It opens up markets. It respects cultures," Attuch wrote.

Attuch noted that the Beijing Declaration emerged in a multipolar world in transition, where the Global South is preparing to build its own future based on sovereignty and justice.

This perspective is shared by Li Haidong, a professor at the China Foreign Affairs University, who emphasized that China and most LAC countries have similar historical experiences of colonization and now share the common aspiration of economic development.

"In terms of improving global governance and building a fair international order, the voices of China and LAC countries are both resounding and aligned," Li concluded. **BR**

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Long-Distance Cooperation

Jiangsu Province deepens collaboration with Latin America and the Caribbean

By Xu Bei & Wei Mingxin

Located on China's eastern coast, Jiangsu Province is one of China's most socially, technologically and economically developed provinces. Though it makes up just 1 percent of China's land area and is home to 6 percent of the population, Jiangsu contributes more than 10 percent of the country's total GDP.

For decades, this coastal powerhouse has reached out across seas and mountains to build meaningful ties with Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). In 2024, trade between the two sides reached $54.77 billion, accounting for 10.6 percent of China's total trade with the LAC region.

On May 13, the Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the Forum of China and Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (China-CELAC Forum) was held in Beijing. Moreover, subnational cooperation continues to thrive through growing sister-city partnerships and other exchanges. Jiangsu has actively participated in subnational cooperation. It has hosted, together with research institutes, the Dialogue Between the Civilizations of China and the LAC for seven consecutive years.

"China-LAC cooperation attests to an ancient Chinese saying: Nothing, not even mountains or oceans, can separate those with a shared goal," said Sun Yi, Director General of the Foreign Affairs Office of the Jiangsu Provincial People's Government.

Sister-city bonds

Jiangsu has formed 23 twinning relations in the LAC region, including three at the provincial level and 20 at the city or county level, representing about 10 percent of all China-LAC sister-city partnerships. Jiangsu's cities also engage in regular friendly exchanges with 40 other LAC cities.

"Despite the geographical distance, these connections remain vibrant," Sun told *Beijing Review*.

In November 2024, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Peruvian President Dina Boluarte attended the inauguration of Chancay Port by video link. Located 60 km north of Lima, the port is a flagship project built by China and Peru under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), a China-proposed initiative to boost connectivity along and beyond the ancient Silk Road routes, and is South America's first smart port.

In the same month, Suzhou in south Jiangsu, and Chancay in Peru's Lima region became sister cities, opening new channels for economic exchange and injecting fresh momentum into the comprehensive strategic partnership between China and Peru. The partnership was advanced in March 2025, when Chancay Port and Suzhou Port signed a sister-port agreement.

COURTESY PHOTO

A delegation from Minas Gerais State, Brazil, led by Governor Romeu Zema (fourth left), visits Xuzhou Construction Machinery Group in Xuzhou, Jiangsu Province, on November 9, 2023

COURTESY PHOTO

Then Uruguayan President Luis Alberto Lacalle Pou cuts the ribbon at a ceremony held for the delivery of electric buses produced by the Jiangsu-based Higer Bus Company, in Montevideo, Uruguay, on December 9, 2024

"China-LAC cooperation attests to an ancient Chinese saying: Nothing, not even mountains or oceans, can separate those with a shared goal."

—Sun Yi, Director General of the Foreign Affairs Office of the Jiangsu Provincial People's Government

Minas Gerais in southeast Brazil is Jiangsu's first provincial-level sister state in the LAC region. Xuzhou Construction Machinery Group (XCMG), a company based in Xuzhou in north Jiangsu, has built an industrial park in Pouso Alegre, an industrial and logistics hub in Minas Gerais. The industrial park was recognized by Jiangsu as a provincial-level overseas cooperation zone in October 2019. Xuzhou and Pouso Alegre are sister cities. The recognition of the industrial park marked a shift in their sister-city cooperation from individual projects to broader collaboration across industrial chains.

"As an emerging market, the LAC is rich in resources and opportunities that align well with Jiangsu's strengths," Sun said. "Under the BRI, more flagship projects are emerging."

The impact of sister-city exchanges also extend to people's daily lives. Jiangsu was among the first provinces to send medical teams to the LAC region. Since 1993, 295 medical personnel in 20 medical teams have been serving in Guyana, treating over 1.31 million patients, saving more than 30,000 critically ill individuals, and performing over 70,000 surgeries.

In 2024, the province marked the 60th anniversary of its first overseas medical team. In the LAC region, these teams have not only delivered vital healthcare services but also fostered trust and goodwill between the peoples, Sun continued.

Economic cooperation

Sun said Jiangsu's economic cooperation with the LAC has entered a "fast track" built on three pillars: manufacturing and industrial chains, energy and mineral development, and agricultural trade and food processing.

In manufacturing, XCMG's production base in Minas Gerais produces cranes and excavators with annual output value exceeding $500 million. In 2024, Hengtong Group, another company from Jiangsu, completed a submarine power cable transmission project in Mexico, marking the debut of China's power cable system solution in the Mexican market.

In the field of energy and mineral resources, Jiangsu's NARI Group has been active in the Brazilian market since 2013 through its branch there. Its advanced equipment and integrated solutions have improved power grid reliability and efficiency in Brazil. In 2014, Brazilian mining giant Vale's Tubarao Port signed an ore blending agreement with Lianyungang Port in north Jiangsu, establishing a long-term supply base for steel mills in the Yangtze River Delta in China.

In agricultural trade and food processing, Jiangsu Yanghe Distillery, based in Suqian, north Jiangsu, acquired a 12.5-percent stake in Chile's second largest wine producer, VSPT Wine Group, through a successful bid in 2018. Jiangsu Soho Holdings Group and Sweet-Scented Osmanthus Duck Group in provincial capital city Nanjing have long imported soybeans and beef from Brazil and Argentina, with annual trade exceeding $800 million.

Jiangsu-LAC economic ties have also expanded into emerging sectors such as renewable energy and digital infrastructure. Bus manufacturer Higer from Suzhou is operating in several countries in the LAC including Peru, Ecuador and Costa Rica. This January, three photovoltaic power plants in Brazil, equipped with systems supplied by Trina Solar Co. Ltd. headquartered in Changzhou, Jiangsu, were connected to the grid. Together, they contribute a total installed capacity of 21 megawatts, injecting more clean energy into Brazil's power supply. ▶▶

Dialogue between civilizations

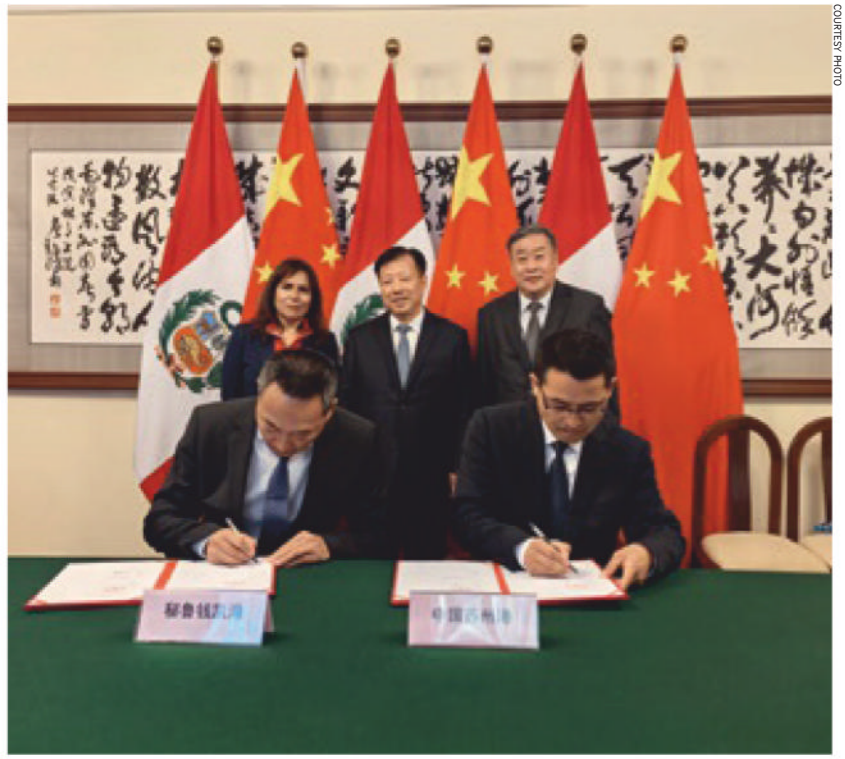
Over the past decade, cultural and people-to-people exchanges under the China-CELAC Forum have flourished, forming a dynamic and diverse landscape. Among the key platforms is the Dialogue Between the Civilizations of China and the LAC, which promotes mutual learning and deepens understanding.

Since 2017, the dialogue, co-hosted by the Foreign Affairs Office of the Jiangsu Provincial People's Government, the Institute of Latin American Studies of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and the Academy of Contemporary China and World Studies affiliated with China International Communications Group, has been serving as a source of cultural strength for the building of a China-LAC community with a shared future.

"Over the past eight years, the event has grown from concept to practice. The cultural exchange mechanism we've built has been continuously enriched and expanded, helping achieve goals like consolidating friendships, forging consensus and shaping global governance," Sun said. "It has also amplified the voice of the Global South, making the dialogue one of the most important public communication platforms between China and the LAC."

The event blends a wide range of activities, including academic discussions, media exchanges, sister-city dialogues, trade matchmaking meetings, product showcases and cultural experience workshops. So far, it has hosted 19 side events, released 24 cooperation outcomes and attracted around 2,000 participants from the political, academic and business communities, as well as media across China and more than 20 LAC countries. Over time, it has built a regular platform for dialogue that continues to boost cooperation in trade, education, culture, youth engagement, think tanks and media.

"Jiangsu brings local flavor and practical experience to the dialogue," Sun noted. Through themed events such as business matchmaking, film and TV series screenings and culinary exchanges, the province has played an active role in promoting cooperation in trade, healthcare, science, and culture between the two sides. The province has also helped LAC partners better understand China's development philosophy, approaches and systems through vivid examples of Jiangsu's modernization endeavors.



COURTESY PHOTO

Representatives of Suzhou Port in south Jiangsu Province and Chancay Port in Peru's Lima region sign a sister port agreement in Lima, Peru, on March 3

This year, the Foreign Affairs Office of Jiangsu is taking the lead in organizing the dialogue's eighth edition.

"In response to the Global Civilizations Initiative put forward by President Xi, we aim to foster mutual trust and consensus through the dialogue, contributing to South-South cooperation and broader diplomatic interests. As 2025 marks the 10th anniversary of the China-CELAC Forum's establishment, it's relevant to propose incorporating the Dialogue Between the Civilizations of China and the LAC into the China-CELAC Forum's formal mechanism."

Planned highlights for this year's edition include a Latin America and the Caribbean Day, with invited guests including former political leaders, diplomats, scholars, cultural figures, think tank experts, business leaders and youth representatives.

"We hope to launch a global academic partnership network for civilizational dialogue, establish a China-LAC alliance of institutes of higher learning, and deepen cooperation through mutual learning and local partnerships," Sun added. "All of these will contribute to building a China-LAC community with a shared future." **BR**

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THROUGH THEIR EYES

People from around the world take you on a journey to rediscover China

China's National Security In the New Era

China's State Council Information Office issued a white paper titled China's National Security in the New Era on May 12. The move aims to provide a comprehensive explanation of the innovative concepts, practices and achievements in China's national security efforts, and enhance the global community's understanding of China's national security. An abstract follows:

In the new era, the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core creatively proposed a holistic approach to national security, established a national security commission under the CPC Central Committee, comprehensively deepened the reform of the system and mechanisms for national security, and accelerated the modernization of the national security system and capabilities.

China's national security in the new era is one that takes the people's security as its ultimate goal, political security as the fundamental task, and national interests as the guiding principle.

It is also one that serves and promotes high-quality development, supports further expansion of high-level opening up, and operates under the rule of law. China coordinates its own security and common security, opposes the generalization of security, does not implement security coercion, and does not accept threats and pressure. The country adheres to independence and self-confidence and the path of national security with Chinese characteristics.

I. China injects certainty and stability into a world of change and disorder

Currently, China has entered a critical period of building itself into a stronger country and rejuvenating the Chinese nation on all fronts by pursuing Chinese modernization. Facing the complex situation of deepening adverse effects brought by changes in the external environment and increasing internal risks and challenges, China pursues a national rejuvenation strategy amid global changes of a scale unseen in a century. The country has maintained overall stability and steady progress in national security. China works together with Asia-Pacific countries to uphold regional peace and development. These inject stability into a volatile and unstable world.

II. A holistic approach to national security guides national security efforts in the new era

A holistic approach to national security fully draws on the essence of fine traditional Chinese culture and systematically summarizes the theoretical achievements and practical experiences of the CPC in safeguarding national security. It is the first major strategic thinking established as the guiding principle for national security efforts since the founding of the People's Republic of China. It is an important component of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era and represents a major theoretical contribution from contemporary China to the global community.

A holistic approach to national security emphasizes taking the people's security as its ultimate goal, political security as the fundamental task, economic security as the foundation, military, technological, cultural and social security as the guarantee, and promoting international security as the support. It takes coordinated steps to ensure development and security, external and internal security, homeland and public security, traditional and non-traditional security, and China's own security and common security. It both upholds national security and creates the conditions for ensuring it. With this new security architecture, China will be able to better safeguard its new pattern of development.

III. Providing solid support for the steady and continued progress of Chinese modernization

In the new era, focusing on achieving national strategic goals and implementing a holistic approach to national security, China's national security firmly fulfills the major responsibilities entrusted by the Party and the people. It upholds the Party's position as the governing party and the socialist system, improves the people's sense of fulfillment, happiness and security, ensures high-quality development, safeguards national territorial integrity and maritime rights and interests, and ensures the safety and reliability of emerging fields. It forestalls and defuses various risks in the process of advancing Chinese modernization, fortifies the security shield essential to the great

China's national security in the new era is one that takes the people's security as its ultimate goal, political security as the fundamental task, and national interests as the guiding principle

rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, and provides strategic support for promoting world peace and development.

IV. Reinforcing security in development and pursuing development in security

In the new era, China has clearly identified the coordination of development and security as one of the major principles of governance, integrating it into the overall framework of economic and social development. The country remains unwavering in advancing high-quality development as its "primary task" while prioritizing the safeguarding of national security as its "paramount mission." By unifying development and security, China ensures they are jointly planned, holistically deployed and mutually reinforced.

As China continues to grow by coordinating opening up and security, its door will only open wider. The nation emphasizes leveraging international rules to uphold security while opening up, drawing on global best practices to accelerate the establishment of modernized risk prevention and control mechanisms. It is refining institutional frameworks to guard against external risks while remaining committed to opening up, fostering synergy between openness and security.

V. Implementing the Global Security Initiative and promoting the common security of the world

The Global Security Initiative advocated by China addresses the urgent need of the international community to uphold world peace and prevent conflicts. It echoes the shared aspirations of the vast majority of nations for win-win cooperation over hegemony and bullying, aligning with humanity's common pursuit of lasting peace and universal security. The initiative offers a new pathway to eliminate the root causes of international conflicts, tackle global security challenges, and improve global security governance.

China advocates strengthening global security governance by practicing the principle of achieving shared growth through discussion and collaboration in engaging in global governance. It upholds true multilateralism, promotes adherence to international law, and drives reforms to make the global security governance system fairer, more equitable, and responsive to the will and interests of the majority of countries. This approach better meets practical needs in addressing global challenges.

VI. Advancing the modernization of the national security system and capacity through deepening reforms

On its new journey in the new era, China is comprehensively deepening reforms with greater emphasis on coordinating development and security, elevating the priority of safeguarding national security, and accelerating the modernization of its national security system and capacity. By 2035, China aims to fully strengthen the system and capacity, creating a robust security shield for the basic realization of socialist modernization. A unified blueprint has been laid across four dimensions: the national security system, public security governance mechanisms, social governance systems and foreign-related national security mechanisms.

Guided by reform and innovation, and focusing on systematic and institutional improvements, China is refining its national security mechanisms. It emphasizes synergy and efficiency, law-based thinking, technological empowerment and grassroots foundations to achieve a healthy interaction between high-quality development and high-level security.

In the new era, China's national security has evolved through comprehensive reform, grown through great struggles, and strengthened through Chinese modernization. As the nation strives toward building a strong country and national rejuvenation, it remains committed to safeguarding its hard-won security, protecting people's safety, and upholding global peace. China will continue to lead the way in peaceful development, promote global stability and prosperity, and work hand in hand with all other nations to build, share and sustain international common security and strive for a world of lasting peace and universal security. **BR**

(Source: *Xinhua News Agency*)

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Disruptive by Design

Tech expo showcases AI innovations that improve people's lives

By Li Xiaoyang

Kunlun Tech, a Beijing-based Internet company, displayed its AI-powered music generator Mureka at the 27th China Beijing International Hi-tech Expo running from May 8 to 11, attracting crowds of visitors. After entering a prompt describing the desired genre and selecting a preferred model, users are able to create music.

Starting from 2020, Kunlun Tech, founded in 2008, has been focusing on AI-related research and development (R&D). According to the company, the Mureka portal has been visited by users from over 100 countries and regions, and the AI model can respond to prompts in 10 languages.

The expo this year showcased more than 1,000 scientific and technological innovations like Mureka. Themed Science and Technology for a Better Future, it gathered over 800 technology companies and institutions from around the world. AI took center stage at the event, showcasing transformative applications across the healthcare, education and manufacturing sectors.

As of late 2024, China had more than 4,500 AI enterprises. More than 200 generative AI large models had been launched in the country, serving more than 600 million users, the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology said.

According to a report released by the China Center for Information Industry Development (CCID) earlier this year, the market size of China's AI industry exceeded 700 billion yuan ($96 billion) in 2024, maintaining a growth rate of more than 20 percent over the past four years.

For a better life

The 2025 China Sleep Health Survey Report, released by the China Sleep Big Data Center in March, reveals that Chinese adults aged 18 and above average 7.06 to 7.18 hours of sleep per night, with 48.5 percent experiencing sleep disturbances.

At the expo, Beijing-based AI company Diyixi Technology Co. Ltd. unveiled a smart pillow, showcasing innovative technological solutions for sleep-related issues.

Cao Naicheng, the company's CEO, told *Beijing Review* that regular pillows fail to adapt to the physiological curvature of the cervical spine when people change sleep postures, which in turn affects sleep quality.

"Our smart pillow is particularly beneficial for people with cervical spine issues," Cao said. He explained that the revolutionary product features an embedded microphone array and snore-recognition technology, enabling it to detect abnormal breathing patterns during sleep. It can then automatically adjust head support angles or deliver subtle vibrations to prompt users to change positions, thereby reducing snoring. Additionally, its built-in sensors collect data such as sleep latency, breathing patterns and heart rate and can detect potential signs of a heart attack.

"For those struggling with insomnia, the pillow aligns with the user's preferred sleep position, and plays calming sounds to help them fall asleep faster," Cao said.

Using a discreet collar-mounted device and a thin throat sensor, an AI-powered artificial throat can accurately detect voice vibrations imperceptible to the human ear and convert them into natural, fluent speech within just two seconds. The technology was developed by Beijing Xinzhiruisheng Technology Co. Ltd.

"This innovation targets speech-impaired individuals, including laryngectomy patients, stroke survivors and people suffering from Parkinson's disease. It is designed to help them communicate with others effortlessly," company CEO Wang Yufeng told *Beijing Review*.

Unlike many products on the market, Wang explained this wearable device requires no surgical implantation—eliminating patient discomfort. Using graphene sensors, it detects laryngeal muscle movements, then leverages AI to decode intended speech. Voice cloning and restoration technologies synthesize strikingly natural vocal output.

(Above) A smart robot for orthopedic surgery displayed at the 27th China Beijing International Hi-tech Expo in Beijing on May 8. The four-day event wrapped up on May 11

Plush toys equipped with AI technology developed by Beijing-based AI company EFFYIC showcased at the 27th China Beijing International Hi-tech Expo

XINHUA

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The company has partnered with medical institutions and nonprofits, training the system on hundreds of hours of real-world data. A commercial release is slated for late 2026.

Upgrading traditional industries

The ROPA AI system developed by Longwood Valley Medtech caught much attention at the expo. The company has developed the world's first AI-powered orthopedic surgical robot, utilizing deep learning and 3D modeling to enhance surgical precision.

According to the company, surgeons typically rely on experience alone to determine prosthesis placement during preoperative planning, introducing uncertainty into the process. The ROPA system addresses the issues through a system that includes surgical simulation software capable of generating personalized 3D surgical plans within five to 10 minutes using a patient's CT scan. It is also equipped with an optical positioning system that monitors and tracks patient movements.

Beijing Chaoyang Environment Group Co. Ltd. debuted an AI-powered incineration system, China's first intelligent waste-to-energy conversion system.

In the second half of 2024, the system began trial operations in the company. So far, all three production lines have been fully operational. The AI technology has helped achieve an automatic operation rate of over 98 percent, decreasing manual workload by 80 percent and increasing electricity output by 4.2 percent, the company said.

AI is also empowering the education industry. Jingle Magic, a tech company founded in Beijing in 2016, introduced its next-generation education devices, an AI-powered smart desk, at the expo.

Han Haibo, Vice President of the company, told *Beijing Review* that classroom teaching in China still largely depends on the use of textbooks and slides, leaving students with little hands-on experience or visual engagement. The AI smart desk makes a difference.

In biology class, placing a bird skeleton card on the desk will instantly generate a 3D model of the avian skeletal structure. Tapping the wing section reveals its biomechanical framework. In science class, after piecing together rocket component cards, students will see a launch simulation.

According to Han, the desk has applied cameras with high-definition and sensors to simulate real-life scenarios. Six users can operate it simultaneously.

"The system also allows students to provide immediate feedback to teachers and mitigate safety risks associated with hazardous experiments," he said.

Beijing-based AI company EFFYIC also caters to children, particularly those left home alone. It integrates its AI model iBaoBao with plush toys, which can interact with humans, clone voices and translate between Standard Chinese and English. Using voice recognition AI, the toys detect emotional cues and deliver personalized comfort responses.

Market potential

China's AI market size will reach 1.73 trillion yuan ($240 billion) by 2035, accounting for 30.6 percent of the global total, according to market research company CCID Consulting.

Zhao Xin, President of the School of AI at Nankai University in Tianjin, wrote in an article recently published by *People's Daily* newspaper that China still faces gaps in core AI theories and technologies. Its research in AI fundamentals such as neural network training processors still requires improvement to catch up in areas including core algorithms, chips and software systems.

But China's manufacturing sector provides a solid foundation for AI-driven industrial upgrades. The growing 5G and Internet of Things networks offer great opportunities for AI applications, according to Zhao.

Chinese AI companies should improve investment in talent cultivation and training and further integrate AI with traditional industries, he suggested. **BR**

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Powering the Future

Seminar discusses the development of nuclear power under the BRICS framework

By Tao Xing

"In China, there's a proverb: Repair the roof before the rain comes. But there's another saying I often refer to: It takes 10 years to grow a tree, but 100 years to cultivate talent. This, once again, underscores the importance of acting in advance. Only by starting today can we reap the rewards a decade from now," Artem Goncharuk, Director General of the East Asia Regional Center of Russian nuclear energy corporation Rosatom, stressed the role of talented people in a country's nuclear power development.

Tran Chi Thanh, President of the Viet Nam Atomic Energy Institute, echoed Goncharuk's remarks, stating that Viet Nam has sent students to Russia and Japan for study of and training in nuclear technologies. The country recently decided to resume its nuclear power program, which was initially launched 16 years ago but was suspended approximately eight years ago, according to Tran.

They made the remarks at a BRICS Nuclear Platform session, themed Key Factors Impacting the Development of Nuclear Power, in Beijing on April 29. The platform is a mechanism for cooperation created by nuclear power companies and agencies from BRICS member and partner states in 2024, including Rosatom, China National Nuclear Corp. (CNNC), ESKOM of South Africa and the Ministry of Innovation and Technology of Ethiopia.

BRICS is a group of emerging economies originally consisting of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

Experts from BRICS member states and partner countries, along with representatives from international and regional energy organizations, exchanged insights on nuclear power development at the event, with a particular focus on collaboration within the BRICS framework.

Developing nuclear energy

Nuclear power projects involve extended construction periods, massive capital requirements, highly complex technologies and stringent regulatory oversight. "These multifaceted challenges make nuclear power financing particularly demanding. Therefore, a stable, long-term government policy is crucial for the development of nuclear energy," Cheng Lei, CFO at the CNNC Strategic Planning Research Institute, said.

For countries that are just beginning to develop nuclear power, policy certainty is fundamental to the sector's growth, according to Cheng.

Additionally, robust nuclear financing mechanisms are essential to attract investors and secure capital market funding, he added, elaborating on the development process in China, which began developing its nuclear power sector in the 1980s and 1990s. In the early stages, the country relied on imported nuclear technologies, and gave strong government support through measures such as credit guarantees and other financial instruments.

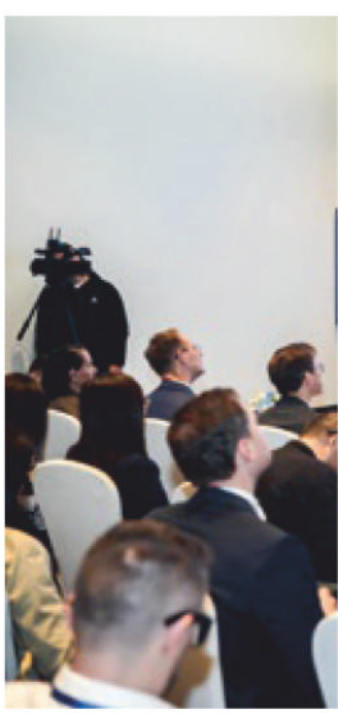
Sengiphile Simelane, Group Executive of Power and Industry at the South African Nuclear Energy Corp., also stressed that funding is fundamental.

South Africa started its nuclear program in the early 1980s. However, when embarking on such a program, one of the main hurdles was difficulties in infrastructure financing. "It's very important to have a long-term vision if you want to establish a nuclear program," Simelane said.

"We understand that the key factor for nuclear development is to have supportive policies and a financing mechanism," said Nadhilah Shani, manager of the ASEAN Center for Energy's Power Generation and Interconnection Department. The center is an intergovernmental organization that serves the interests of the 10 ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) member states in terms of energy cooperation within the region.

According to her, energy demand across the ASEAN expanse is projected to rise sharply by 2050—approximately 2.6 times higher than current levels. Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam and others are preparing their national policies, regulatory frameworks and necessary infrastructure

A BRICS Nuclear Platform session, themed Key Factors Impacting the Development of Nuclear Power, is held in Beijing on April 29



to launch nuclear energy programs.

Additionally, engaging with the public and local communities to build trust in nuclear energy is essential, particularly in addressing misconceptions and concerns.

"One of the biggest challenges that nuclear power programs face is securing and sustaining the support of key stakeholders. This would obviously include ensuring that the public is on board when we want to deploy nuclear power programs in South Africa," Max Msabala, ESKOM's Engineering Manager for the Nuclear Build Program, said.

According to Msabala, ESKOM has launched a proactive campaign aiming to communicate the benefits of nuclear power, raise public awareness of its diverse applications and build public understanding of and support for the zero-carbon energy source.

Securing a stable nuclear fuel supply is decisive in ensuring the continuous operation of nuclear power plants, according to Chen Xin, Deputy Director of the Uranium Resources Department at China's State Nuclear Uranium Resource Development Co. Ltd.

She noted that while uranium is classified as a strategic resource in many countries, a paradox exists globally: Countries endowed with abundant uranium often lack nuclear reactors, whereas major nuclear energy producers like China face insufficient domestic uranium production to meet their reactor demands.

"This situation underscores the vital importance of energy and supply chain security, which necessarily requires strengthened international cooperation," Chen emphasized.

François Morin, China Director of the World Nuclear Association, expressed strong confidence in nuclear power's development prospects. He cited World Bank President Ajay Banga's endorsement of nuclear energy, noting that the bank will convene a board meeting in June to reconsider its longstanding policy against funding nuclear power projects. This review may potentially qualify nuclear power for inclusion in green financing initiatives.

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BRICS collaboration

"BRICS nations have significant potential to collaborate in supporting nuclear technology development in newcomer countries. By joining forces through research initiatives and knowledge-sharing programs, we can pool expertise, resources and best practices to accelerate safe and sustainable nuclear energy adoption," Teclemariam Tessema, Coordinator of the Nuclear Expert Group under Ethiopia's Ministry of Innovation and Technology, said.

According to Tessema, experienced nations can engage in agreements with newcomer countries to facilitate the transfer of advanced technologies. "This cooperation can help accelerate the development and deployment of nuclear technologies by leveraging the expertise and experience of the more advanced nations within the group through these agreements," he said.

"We can also work together to harmonize regulatory frameworks and standards related to nuclear technologies in newcomer countries. This can help ensure safety, security and compliance with international norms," he added.

"BRICS possesses immense potential for joint technological development, knowledge transfer, shared investments, designing next-generation nuclear power plants and establishing international standards," Mahmoud Azizi, Director of International Affairs, Public Relations and Social Acceptance at Iran's Nuclear Power Production and Development Co., said.

"What's particularly noteworthy is that all five founding BRICS nations are established nuclear power countries. It's a good example for all the newcomers. They have all knowledge and operational experience. So there is no difficulty to transfer this knowledge to other countries," Morin said.

"In the beginning, we can concentrate on some particular projects of common interest, for example, talent cultivation projects for every country to contribute to and benefit from," Goncharuk concluded. **BR**

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Blossoming in the Desert

How a resilient rose variety is transforming Yutian County's ecology, economy and rural landscape By Ji Jing

Roses are typically admired in gardens, but in Yutian County, Hotan Prefecture, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, they've become steadfast "sentinels," rooted in sand dunes to combat desertification.

Yutian is located on the northern foothills of the Kunlun Mountains and the southern edge of the Taklimakan Desert—China's largest and the world's second largest drifting desert. On November 28 last year, Yutian completed the planting of 100,000 rose bushes, the final step in creating a 3,046-km sand-blocking green belt encircling the Taklimakan Desert.

"Can roses really grow in the desert?" This is a common question among tourists visiting Yutian.

Yutian has an arid climate, with large temperature differences between day and night and plenty of sunshine. This environment creates suitable conditions for the growth of specific rose varieties, and the county has a long history of rose cultivation.

Roses were introduced to Yutian as early as the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 220) via the ancient Silk Road. Yutian roses are a unique variety adapted to desert conditions. Irrigated by snowmelt from the Kunlun Mountains, they possess rich medicinal, health-enhancing and aromatic properties.

Initially, Yutian residents planted roses in their courtyards, using them to make rose jam and tea. In recent years, however, driven by economic prospects and the need for sand control and anti-desertification, Yutian roses have transitioned from courtyard gardens to the desert, becoming a vital economic crop.

A difficult task

The Yutian rose variety demonstrates remarkable drought tolerance thanks to its extensive root system. "Look, this is the rose's roots," Cai Xianfu, Secretary of the Communist Party of China Arele Township Committee in Yutian County, told *Guangming Daily* newspaper in late April, as he dug into the sandy soil, revealing the rose's crisscrossing root system, with the longest root reaching more than three meters underground.

This robust root system not only provides access to deep water sources, but also plays a vital role in stabilizing the sand, contributing to dune stabilization and the overall improvement of the desert's ecological environment. Furthermore, Yutian desert roses tend to grow in dense clusters, forming lush vegetation. These thick branches and leaves effectively act as a barrier, reducing wind speeds and blocking sand.

According to the Yutian County Forestry and Grassland Bureau, the local government has strategically planted rose belts in the areas of Yutian most vulnerable to wind and sand, acting as a frontline defense against desertification.

However, successfully cultivating roses in such a harsh desert environment is a considerable challenge. The region's low rainfall and scarce water make large-scale growing difficult. Compounding the problem, frequent and severe wind and sandstorms can bury young rose bushes, hindering their growth.

Cai recalls a particularly devastating sandstorm that swept through newly planted rose seedlings one year. Within hours, the powerful winds carried immense amounts of sand, completely burying nearly a third of the seedlings. Even after the buried seedlings were promptly excavated by staff, many did not survive due to severe damage to their root systems.

To overcome these obstacles and foster successful rose cultivation, Yutian's related departments have collaborated closely with researchers. They have explored and implemented scientific growing techniques based on careful analysis of sand dune distribution, prevailing wind patterns and local hydrological conditions.

A key innovation has been the adoption of a mixed "arbor plus shrub" planting model. In this approach, tall arbors serve as windbreaks at the forefront of the area, effectively reducing wind

A farmer harvests roses at the rose growing base of Xinjiang Yutian Guimi Biotechnology Co. Ltd. in Yutian County, Hotan Prefecture, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, on May 18, 2023

speed and mitigating the direct erosive impact of wind and sand on the roses. Complementing this, the well-developed root systems of shrubs intertwine with the rose roots, further stabilizing the sand, improving soil structure and creating a more favorable environment for rose growth. This approach greatly enhances the survival rate of the roses.

Through this innovative growing method, specifically adapted to the unique challenges of the local environment, Yutian has successfully established an effective desert ecological protection system. This year, Arele Township plans to expand the rose growing area by an additional 1,200 hectares on the fringes of the Taklimakan Desert.

Multiple benefits

Growing roses in the desert not only combats desertification but also substantially boosts local incomes, thereby increasing villagers' motivation to participate in desertification control efforts.

"Last year, my family's income increased by 63,000 yuan ($8,759) just from growing roses. And the government provides subsidies for growing roses," explained Maitusun Yibulayimu, a villager from Wanfang Village in Arele Township, to *Sanqin Daily* newspaper. Witnessing the gradual greening of the desert around him in recent years, he decided to contract 3 hectares of desert land for rose cultivation. "This has not only increased my income but also allowed me to contribute to anti-desertification efforts in my hometown," he added.

The scale of rose growing in Yutian has continued to expand remarkably in recent years, with the current growing area in the county exceeding 5,000 hectares. In 2024, Yutian's rose flower output surpassed 12,000 tons, generating an average output value of 59,595 yuan ($8,285) per hectare. This economic success has driven substantial income growth for 4,238 households in the region.

VCG

Today, Yutian's rose industry has blossomed beyond mere growing, evolving into a diverse and multifaceted enterprise.

Xinjiang Yutian Guimi Biotechnology Co. Ltd. exemplifies this evolution, focusing on extending the industrial chain and boosting added value. Through intensified research, the company has created a diverse range of deeply processed rose products, including rose tea, essential oils and rose-based food products. Currently, the company operates a rose growing base spanning over 600 hectares. It now has a portfolio of over 70 different rose product types and has created more than 1,000 jobs.

In Yutian, the value of roses transcends their role in sand control and income generation.

A stroll through the local villages reveals clusters of roses blooming along the rural pathways. Public spaces have been thoughtfully landscaped, with rose-themed flower beds scattered in a well-proportioned manner, complementing the residences and creating a visually appealing environment. As the rose industry has developed, the county has skillfully integrated rose elements into rural landscape construction, enhancing the beauty of the local villages.

Leveraging the extensive rose growing base, Yutian has also developed several eco-tourism attractions. These destinations offer tourists the opportunity to immerse themselves in a "sea of roses," participate in rose picking activities, and even learn about rose product creation. For instance, Arele Township is developing tourism centered on the rose industry, transforming itself into a leisure destination that integrates rose growing and picking, sightseeing, rose-themed banquets and educational tours.

Jiang Donghui, Deputy Director of the Yutian County Forestry and Grassland Bureau, shared with *Guangming Daily* that, alongside expanding the growing area and scale, the county will prioritize technological innovation, industrial integration, digital transformation and green development. The goal is to further transform the desert rose industry into a robust pillar of the local economy, a "happiness industry" that empowers farmers to thrive and increase their income. **BR**

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A Recipe for Success

Shared kitchens cater to both the general public and the food delivery industry By Zhang Yage

Since the mid-2010s, the sharing economy has swept across China, allowing for shared creation, production, distribution, trade and consumption of goods and services. Now, the model has expanded beyond bicycles and powerbanks into more essential quality-of-life sectors. Shared kitchens have emerged to meet modern people's increasing need for quality food and speedy services across multiple scenarios.

A shared kitchen refers to a communal cooking space with standard equipment that can be jointly accessed and utilized. In hospitals, for instance, said kitchens have become anchors for patients and their families who are nursing them.

Serving the public

"My mother was hospitalized for nearly six months last year, and I relied on the hospital's shared kitchen to cook all her rehabilitation meals," Shanghai resident Chen Kang told *Beijing Review*. "With her health condition requiring low sugar, oil and salt intakes, takeout wasn't an ideal option, so I cooked for her most of the time. I believe the shared kitchen played a major role in her faster recovery and earlier discharge."

"The space comes equipped with sinks, induction cook tops, range hoods and microwaves—everything but ingredients and utensils, which you can get at the supermarket located within a 15-minute walk from the hospital. It feels just like cooking at home," she added.

"As a specialty hematology hospital serving patients nationwide with extended treatment cycles, we provide shared kitchen facilities to help reduce living expenses while better meeting patient's specific dietary needs during treatment," Qiao Li, head of Patient Services at Beijing Boren Hospital, told news portal Lifetimes.cn. "The critical success factor lies in standardized management, including equipment maintenance and safety monitoring."

Heart-warming adoptions

Shared kitchens in hospitals appeared across the country in the mid-2010s, under policy encouragement. In 2016, the State Council, the highest state administrative organ, issued an outline for the Healthy China 2030 Plan, which explicitly proposed to optimize health services and emphasized the need for medical services to adopt a more human-centered and refined approach. In 2020, the release of the Service and Operational Standards for Shared Kitchens by the National Health Commission provided, for the first time, standardized guidelines for this model.

In 2023, the commission issued a plan for improving the healthcare experience and enhancing patient satisfaction, which saw shared kitchens move from local pilot programs to nationwide promotion. Subsequently, local governments, including Beijing, Shanghai, Shandong Province and Jiangxi Province, have successively introduced related policies, helping hospitals at the secondary level and above to pilot shared kitchens.

"Hospitals aren't professional food service providers, and cleanliness must be the top priority when operating shared kitchens," Zhuang Yiqiang, Director of the Guangzhou Ailibi Hospital Management Center, told Lifetimes.cn. "We need detailed, actionable plans to prevent food contamination and poisoning. Equally critical are safety protocols such as regular inspections to eliminate risks stemming from water and electricity usage." Shared kitchens have also made their way into universities and neighborhood service centers. For college students, the limitations of dining halls, nearby restaurants and food delivery options often fail to meet their desire for personalized culinary experiences and social interaction. Shared kitchens fill this gap by providing both the space and tools for students to cook their own meals while fostering community engagement.

At the Jiangsu University of Science and Technology, students have been able to book their shared kitchen time slot through an online reservation system since last October. The university supplies the venue and basic seasonings free of charge, while participants bring their own ingredients.

Meanwhile, in community centers, these kitchens have evolved into platforms for elderly care initiatives and strengthened social bonds among seniors. "With an aging population and many older residents living apart from their children, shared kitchens create a platform that enriches their daily life and brings warmth to elders," Wu Meili, a volunteer at Haibin Town Community Service Center in Shanghai's Fengxian District, told local media.

Wide extension

In addition to serving non-profit institutions like eldercare community centers, hospitals and universities, shared kitchens also inject vitality to China's food

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Volunteers prepare meals for the elderly at a community center in Huating, Gansu Province, on November 22, 2024

delivery businesses. Unlike storefront businesses lining streets and commercial districts, shared kitchens may be located anywhere, from a residential apartment unit to sometimes even a repurposed basement.

For food entrepreneurs, shared kitchens offer access to cost-effective infrastructure services, alleviating the burden of pooling initial investments in rental, promotion, designing, human resources and brand building.

Beyond supplying the physical space, utilities and gas, shared kitchens for food delivery businesses also come equipped with professional-grade appliances, tables, chairs and other essentials. In addition to reducing upfront investment, they free entrepreneurs from time-consuming tasks like scouting locations, and managing renovations—dramatically lowering their barriers to entry in the food industry.

"Operating a delivery business in a shared kitchen is extremely low-cost," Chen Hang, manager of a shared kitchen in Yanta District, Xi'an of Shaanxi Province, told a local newspaper.

"Depending on the size of the space and whether natural gas is available, renting a shared kitchen costs between 1,500 and 3,500 yuan ($208-$416) per month," he explained. "Totaling the costs of stoves, display freezers, ingredients, rent and deposit, you can open a delivery-only shop for under 20,000 yuan ($2,767)." Compared with ordinary restaurants, takeout businesses operating from shared kitchens lack a certain level of exposure. Consequently, many merchants opt to franchise a well-known brand that is already familiar to the general public. "For franchise brands specializing in single items, the franchise fee is under 10,000 yuan ($1,388)," Chen added. "Taking platform promotion fees into account, you can launch a franchise delivery shop with just 35,000 yuan ($4,858) of startup capital, making it a truly low-barrier venture." "The growth of shared kitchens also enhances supply chain and food delivery platform efficiency," Chen observed. In these shared kitchen hubs, adjacent businesses collaboratively source ingredients through group purchasing, a cost-saving strategy that benefits all participants.

The smart order-dispatch system further optimizes operations by automatically assigning deliveries based on both restaurant preparation times and customer locations, making delivery more efficient.

"During peak hours, riders typically collect three to four orders per trip here," Chen noted, highlighting the area's optimized logistics flow.

Despite their benefits and rapid expansion, shared kitchens need stronger regulatory oversight. At a March 2024 symposium on high-quality development in the delivery sector hosted by Shaanxi Provincial Market Supervision Administration, officials mandated stricter platform accountability measures to crack down on unlicensed online food operations.

"We will intensify platform accountability for online meal delivery services," a market regulation official said at the forum. "This includes rigorous enforcement of food business license verification systems and requires platforms to proactively submit merchant registration data to regulatory authorities." The official emphasized the targeted rectification of common violations: "We're prioritizing the correction of unsanitary food production environments and nonstandard processing practices of the delivery kitchen sector." **BR**

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A Gateway to the Open Road

Recreational vehicles (RVs) are becoming increasingly popular in China, part of growing travel and leisure trends that include exploring non-traditionally touristy parts of China and taking independent, self-guided vacations. There are now more than 210,000 RVs in use nationwide and last year, the market exceeded 100 billion yuan ($13.8 billion), a 7.9-percent year-on-year increase.

Drawing together over 100 RV companies and enthusiasts from around the country, the All in CARAVANING 2025 event took place at Shougang Park in Beijing from May 9 to 11. Highlights included new-energy models, such as plug-in hybrids, as well as falling prices, with entry-level models now on sale for as little as 100,000 yuan ($13,800). **BR**

(Text and photos by Wei Yao)

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1. The interior of a recreational vehicle on show at the event

2. Celebrated German table tennis star Timo Boll, who has been a brand ambassador for the German Caravanning Industry Association, plays an exhibition match against former Chinese national team player Yin Hang

3. The event venue, Shougang Park, is a multi-use space repurposed from a steel plant

4. A business talk

2

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Middle-Class Aspirations

By Einar Tangen

In September 2021, I traveled to Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region for the second time, the first being in 2014, in the midst of turmoil due to separatists.

I was able to talk to people and we didn't talk to the people that the local government wanted us to talk to. We talked to people straight off the street.

We even followed somebody home from the maternity hospital.

The proud parents had two sons but longed for a daughter. Both were only intermittently employed and lived with the husband's family. They had paid 320 yuan ($50) for the entire delivery process at a newly opened hospital. The smile on the proud grandfather's face and the looks of his shy but inquisitive grandsons as they greeted the newest addition to the family, a granddaughter, is something that will remain inscribed in my mind.

My visit also helped debunk the false narratives about an area and people in fear, where mothers are forced to have abortions, where daughters are unwanted and where people are locked up, tortured and killed in "concentration camps."

We went to their home twice, once in the evening and once more during the day, to record the family's joy when the "gift," which is what they named her in Uygur, came home for the first time.

I also interviewed a woman who was pushed by her family to get help at a training center after her father passed away. She had been convinced by an acquaintance that unless she stopped working and embraced the Wahhabist version of Sharia (Islamic law), her father would go to hell.

The centers were set up to contain and remedy the dissemination of religious extremism and frequent terrorist incidents. All trainees had graduated by October 2019.

XINHUA

Einar Tangen (second left) and media representatives from the Miao Xiaojuan Studio talk with a family in Kashi Prefecture, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, on September 20, 2021

She had been a kindergarten teacher, and at the training center, her talent as a performer was recognized and she is now the star of the daily show that welcomes tourists to the ancient city of Kashi (Kashgar). In talking to her, one could not help noticing that it was as if she was talking about a different person when she told the story of her past.

There were other activities in the towns and cities of Xinjiang, but they all spoke to the same thing: It was about Chinese people going about their daily lives, working, playing and pursuing their dreams.

We watched local election preparations and then watched as people cast their ballots for the people they wanted to represent them. We talked to five candidates who were competing for four positions on the village board. Noticeably, no candidate made election promises or attacked the other candidates. Each just talked about what they had done and their desire to serve.

We then walked around the village and asked random people if they knew the candidates, to which they all answered "yes." "People know who they are, and we believe they have the desire and ability to help the village," they said.

I noted there weren't any election posters or yard signs.

When I asked why, the answer I got was: People don't do that, and it wouldn't do any good because if people did not know the people running and their characters, they would not vote for them.

In terms of the people we talked to, about 50 percent were random people we stopped and asked questions of. What became clear was that people's minds were not on politics but the realities of their lives, economic opportunity, access to medical care and their families.

The attitudes and aspirations of the people we interviewed were the same as the middle-class attitudes and aspirations of those in the developed world: making money to pay for their children's university educations, vacations, cars, houses, savings, access to good medical care and how to take care of their elders.

The 20 hours I spent traveling through Kashi, where most residents are Uygur, revealed a normal community where children played in the lanes, the corn was dried on the roads, and people went about their lives, not consumed by fear, but with a desire to improve their families' futures—a depiction, which is not just the story of Kashi or Xinjiang, but all of China. **BR**

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